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MONDAY, DECEMBER 18, 1989/JAMADIUL AWWAL 20, 1410 AH

20 PAGES 150 FILLS

Egypt bridges Syria rift

DAMASCUS, Dec 17, (Reuters): An Egyptian minister paid a breakthrough visit to Syria today after more than a decade of soured relations over Cairo's separate peace treaty with Israel.

President Hafez Al Assad told Egyptian Information Minister Salwa Sharif that Damascus wanted to heal the rift, presidential spokesman Jouban Kourieh reported.

"President Assad affirmed Syria's keen interest to strengthen co-operation with Egypt in all fields to serve the interests of both countries and the Arab nation," he said.

Ties between the two countries began to improve after Assad met Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak at an Arab League summit in Morocco in May. On Tuesday an Egyptian airliner landed in Damascus, restoring an air link broken 10 years earlier.

Sharif, the first Egyptian mini-

Bush, Mitterrand reiterate support for Hirawi

KUWAIT, Dec 17, (Kuna): US President George Bush and French President Francois Mitterrand, at the end of a three-hour summit on the French-Dutch Caribbean island of St Martin, last night reiterated their support for Lebanese President Elias Hiriawi and urged rebel army General Michel Aoun to evacuate the presidential palace.

Voice of America, monitored here, quoted President Bush as saying at the end of the summit talks that he and President Mitterrand were working towards a joint conviction of avoiding further bloodshed in Lebanon and that they both recognise the authority of President Hiriawi.

VOA reported that President Bush believed that situation in Lebanon could move towards tranquility if the former army commander, Gen. Aoun, abandoned his adherence to power.

Bush and Mitterrand last night also renewed their support for the Arab League efforts to achieve a political settlement in Lebanon.



Mitterrand (right) and Bush hold their first discussions in a tent at St Martin Island. (Reuters wirephoto)

See also page 6 & 7

ster to visit Syria for more than 12 years, said: "With God's will, we will continue the march towards joint Arab action."

Asked by a reporter whether diplomatic relations would soon

be restored, he said the two governments had made a breakthrough in relations which amounted to more than diplomatic ties.

Syria and Libya are the only

Arab countries which have not restored relations with Egypt, broken because of the 1979 Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty.

Egypt's ties with Libya are also improving.

Riyadh backs missile chase

Amir in Abu Dhabi on way to Muscat

MUSCAT, Dec 17, (Agencies): Saudi Arabian Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al Faisal defended today Arab efforts to acquire ballistic missile technology, saying this was a stabilising factor in the Middle East.

"The technology being sought by the Arab states is defensive and not for aggression on others," he told the Omani News Agency when he arrived in Muscat for a summit meeting of the six-member

Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC).

"Any advance in this (technology) will have a positive impact on regional stability," he added.

The leaders of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are expected to discuss political and security concerns at their summit tomorrow.

Prince Saud was commenting on Iraq's successful launch this month of its first three-stage missile capable of putting satellites into orbit.

"This is an Arab gain not only for Iraq but for the whole Arab nation because it is a proof that the Arab nation is capable of harnessing the modern technology," he said.

Iraq said the rocket launched on Dec 5 would be used only for scientific missions but it had also developed a new surface-to-surface missile which might be used if the deadlocked peace talks with Iran broke down completely.

Prince Saud made no mention of Saudi Arabia's own missile programme. It has bought CSS-2 intermediate-range missiles from China which would be capable of reaching several Middle East countries, including Iran and Israel.

HH the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmed arrived in Abu Dhabi this afternoon on his way, by car, to Oman to take part in the 10th GCC summit.

United Arab Emirates President Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahayan received the Amir on arrival at Al Mafraq bridge, on the highway between Abu Dhabi and the city of Al Ein.

The two leaders embraced and exchanged warm greetings and best wishes.

Meanwhile, Kuwait's Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmed arrived in Muscat, today.

Sheikh Sabah came by a special Kuwait Airways flight which also carried four other ministers, chief editors of the Kuwaiti dailies, chairman of the board of Kuna and eight Kuwaiti figures who will be honoured with medals at a ceremony officiated by Sultan Qaboos of Oman on Tuesday.

GCC foreign ministers this evening approved part of the

(Continued on Page 9)

Firm 'tied' to Iraq N-tech

HAMBURG, West Germany, Dec 17, (Reuters): A news magazine said yesterday that West German exporters supplied equipment to Iraq that could enable it to manufacture nuclear weapons.

But a company named in the report dismissed the suggestion as nonsense.

The West German magazine Der Spiegel said a company named H + H Metallform, based near Muenster, had delivered to an Iraqi nuclear research centre machinery that could manufacture equipment for enriching uranium 235, used to make atomic bombs.

One of the company's owners, Peter Huettner, told Reuters the report was "utter nonsense."

Yang talks to skip arms



Yang Shangkun waves

BEIJING, Dec 17, (Kuna): Chinese President Yang Shangkun left here today on an 11-day tour of four Arab countries that would take him to Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait and Oman.

In a pre-departure discussion with reporters, Yang denied that his talks would cover China's sensitive arms sales in the region. "Since this is a goodwill visit to other governments, the question of military sales will not be on the agenda of discussion," he said.

Panama city shortly after 9 pm last night when they made a wrong turn. At a checkpoint, they encountered about 40 Panamanian civilians and about six soldiers armed with Soviet-made AK-47 assault rifles.

Ormsbee said the crowd chanted "anti-Gringos" slogans as the soldiers opened the doors of the American's Chevrolet sedan and tried to pull the officers out of the car.

He said the Americans managed to drive off and the Panamanian soldiers fired three shots in rapid succession, and after a pause, fired two more shots.

Singh seeks test in House

NEW DELHI, Dec 17, (Reuters): Indian Prime Minister Vishwanath Pratap Singh will seek a vote of confidence for his fragile minority government at a new session of parliament opening tomorrow.

Bitter debates over separatist violence in the troubled Indian states of Punjab and Kashmir are also expected at the session, which ends on Dec 29.

The high point will come on Thursday when Singh puts his two-week-old National Front government to a vote of confidence in the 545-member Lower House, where his alliance controls only 144 seats.

Singh is expected to win the vote with the support of the right-wing Hindu Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) with 88 Lower House members and leftist parties.

Former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's Congress Party, defeated in last month's polls, sits in the opposition with 193 seats.

Rajiv, in an unfamiliar role of opposition leader, will be the focus of attention in the Houses as he spearheads a campaign to win back the premiership.

He is expected to criticise Singh for bowing to the demands of Kashmiri separatists and releasing five of their colleagues in exchange for the kidnapped daughter of Home Minister Mufti Mohammad Saeed.

Singh will also have to defend his policy on neighbouring Punjab, where he was released several leaders of a militant Sikh movement.

The released leaders have joined four colleagues, whose parliamentary seats in last month's elections, in demanding autonomy for India's most prosperous agricultural state.

The Sikh militants say their demands, which include the release from jail of all their colleagues, must be met first before they attend meetings of the committee.

Full details Page 2

Weather

RATHER cold weather with moderate north-westerly wind may freshen at times.
State of sea: Moderate to rough
High water: 2.22 am, 4.45 pm
Low water: 10.00 am, 10.00 pm
Sunset: 4.38 am
Sunrise: 4.53 pm
Maximum temperatures recorded:
Kuwait: 17°C 63°F
Abuhadi: 15°C 59°F
Fahala: 16°C 61°F
Minimum temperatures recorded:
Kuwait: 5°C 41°F
Abuhadi: 8°C 46°F
Fahala: 8°C 46°F
Movement temperatures expected:
Kuwait: 18°C 64°F
Abuhadi: 15°C 59°F
Fahala: 15°C 59°F
Maximum humidity recorded:
Kuwait: 66 per cent
Abuhadi: 74 per cent
Fahala: 72 per cent

Carrot for Punjab

Rajiv balks at Singh initiative

NEW DELHI, Dec 17, (Agencies): India's new government promised today to repeal laws directed against Sikh militants and to punish instigators of anti-Sikh riots five years ago.

Prime Minister Vishwanath Pratap Singh called an all-party meeting in New Delhi to draw up a peace plan for the northern state, where more than 1,900 people have died in Sikh separatist violence this year.



Storms lash UK

Giant waves pound houses on the quayside in Porthleven, Cornwall, southwest England as storms lash coastal areas of Britain. Debris of fishing huts can be seen in the foreground. (Reuters wirephoto)

Kabul rocketed

10 killed, 27 injured

ISLAMABAD, Dec 17, (AP): Ten people were killed and 27 wounded today when US-backed insurgents rocketed Kabul, Afghan government radio said.

Radio Kabul, monitored in Islamabad, said the rebels fired three US-made rockets from the Paghman heights, about 15 miles (25 kilometres) west of the city.

"Old men, women and children are among the casualties," Radio Kabul said of today's rocketing. It blamed the attacks on the fundamentalist Ittehad-I-Islami Party of Abdul Rasul Sayyaf, one of the rebel factions.

Afghanistan's Soviet-backed government has reported hundreds of civilians killed in rebels rocket attacks on the capital since June. Each side says the other is primarily responsible for civilian casualties.

(See Page 14)

A joint statement after the meeting called for "a fresh approach ... to resolve the Punjab problem on an enduring basis."

But headline Sikh leaders elected to parliament in last month's general elections did not show up for the talks.

Simranjit Singh Mann, released from prison two weeks ago, demanded the government first release Sikh detainees, repeal anti-terrorist laws and punish anti-Sikh rioters.

The joint statement met at least two of those conditions by calling for repeal of the laws and prosecution of the rioters.

Prime Minister Singh, who took

Justice Sabyasachi Mukharji tipped as next chief justice of India. — Page 2.

office two weeks ago, told reporters after the meeting he was confident the hardliners would attend the next round of Punjab talks.

Singh said he would proceed step by step to find peace in Punjab: "This may be slow but the solution will be lasting."

The statement called also for action against police and officials who it said had extorted money and harassed people in the name of combating terrorism but also said those who fought terrorism deserved full support and should not be demoralised.

The Congress Party of ousted prime minister Rajiv Gandhi, however, rejected the joint statement because it did not have a hand in drafting it and because the headline Sikh parties did not attend the meeting, a party spokesman told reporters.

"They (the government) did not consult us. As the previous government, we have a claim to know what their own stand is on key issues of Punjab," the spokesman told reporters.

Rajiv's Congress Party is demanding a statement on the violence in Punjab and on reported statements of several Sikh militants expressing support for the creation of Khalistan.

Singh's inability to get the full consensus he was looking for could overshadow difficulties for his minority government when the newly-elected parliament opens tomorrow.

Thomas Abraham adds Congress leader P.V. Narasimha Rao told reporters later that the Congress Party had refused to endorse the joint declaration because it had not been consulted during the drafting process and because the statement did not have a word to say about several "major and substantive issues."

Rao said the paper was silent on many crucial aspects like the renewed demand for a separate Sikh state and the role of certain Pakistani agencies in Punjab violence.

Rao maintained that his party was willing to participate in any meeting at any time and engage in free and frank discussions provided the government spelt out its policies on the substantive issues.

Panamanian soldiers shoot dead US officer; state of war declared

PANAMA CITY, Dec 17, (UPI): Panamanian soldiers shot and killed an off-duty US officer as he and three colleagues drove away from a checkpoint confrontation near the Panamanian defence forces headquarters late yesterday, officials said.

A statement from the Panamanian defence forces today charged the US officers had fired at Panamanian soldiers and civilians as they drove through the checkpoint, wounding a soldier and two civilians. US officials denied the report and said the American officers were unarmed.

The shooting last night followed by one day Panama's "state of war" declaration against the

United States for what it claims is US aggression against the Panamanian people. In that declaration, the country's National Assembly named Gen. Manuel Noriega head of government to formalise his power.

US officials said the shooting appeared to be an isolated incident and that they have no hard evidence the declaration of a state of war prompted the violence. They said a number of incidents during the last two years were sparked by strained US-Panamanian relations.

In Washington, Defence Secretary Dick Cheney called a meeting of key US officials to look into the shooting, but there was no indica-

tion President Bush planned any military response. The US embassy in Panama city expressed "grave concern over the unwarranted use of deadly force by the Panamanian defence forces."

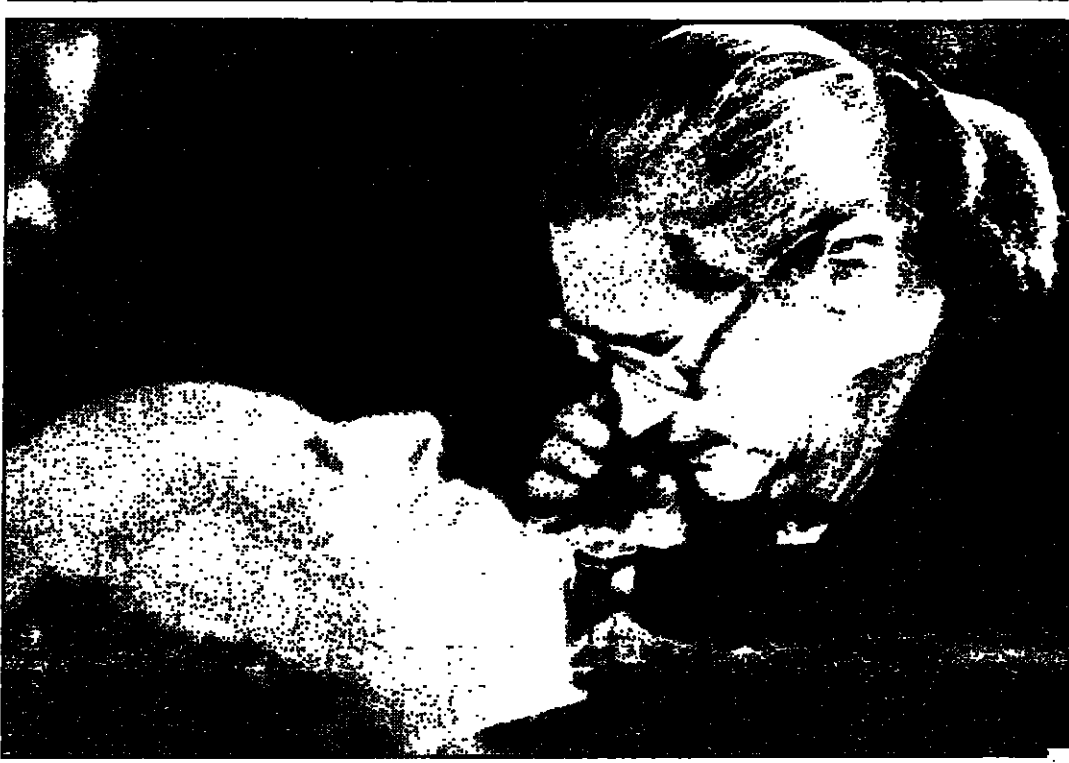
The US southern command ordered all its personnel in Panama to stay on their bases and keep out of Panama City until further notice, and the Panamanian defence forces put troops on a maximum state of alert.

Southern command spokesman William Ormsbee said the American officer and three colleagues, all unarmed and in civilian clothes, were looking for a restaurant in downtown

Panama city shortly after 9 pm last night when they made a wrong turn. At a checkpoint, they encountered about 40 Panamanian civilians and about six soldiers armed with Soviet-made AK-47 assault rifles.

Ormsbee said the crowd chanted "anti-Gringos" slogans as the soldiers opened the doors of the American's Chevrolet sedan and tried to pull the officers out of the car.

He said the Americans managed to drive off and the Panamanian soldiers fired three shots in rapid succession, and after a pause, fired two more shots.



A wife mourns

Yelena Bonner, wife of Andrei Sakharov, cries over the body of Sakharov lying in state in Moscow's Youth Palace yesterday. (Reuters wirephoto, Details on Page 7)

Cory orders trials

De Villa calls for loyalty

MANILA, Dec 17, (Reuters): Philippine President Corazon Aquino today ordered the immediate trial of leaders of this month's failed coup, branding them traitors who were paid "thirty pieces of silver" to bring her down.

Aquino, speaking on a pre-recorded radio programme, urged civilians to come forward with information that could help prosecute leaders of the Dec 1-7 army revolt, in which more than 100 people were killed and at least 500 wounded.

"I order general (Renato) de Villa to immediately investigate their top leaders," she said. "I also order military courts to hold a continuous trial and I ask the people to attend the proceedings."

De Villa, the country's Armed Forces chief, said the military has captured 1,800 of about 3,000 mutineers who took part in the coup attempt, the sixth bloodiest since Aquino came to power in 1986.

Aquino vowed to show no mercy to the mutineers' leaders.

"Why did the rebel troops do that contemptible act? They did it ... for thirty pieces of silver," she said. "For

the leaders of these rebel troops ... our policy is to show them no mercy."

Aquino did not say who allegedly

Full coverage

- Page 12 -

paid the coup leaders. The military has said unnamed financiers paid some of the rebel officers 25 million pesos (\$1.3 million) to mutiny.

The President said the coup attempt was backed by politicians who "knew they had no chance in an election." She did not identify them but last week she hinted her estranged Vice-President Salvador Laurel and Senator Juan Ponce Enrile, a former defence chief, were involved.

Government troops moved into position around Manila and the southern city of Davao during the weekend to stop possible new attacks by army rebels. But De Villa ruled out a major fresh attack by the rebels, believed to be led by cashiered Colonel Gregorio Honasan.

"If there is still any group planning to do this, I am warning them — the Armed Forces will be there to confront them and stop them and crush them," he said yesterday.

De Villa said the military, on full alert in Manila, had strengthened its troops around the capital and would maintain its combat readiness throughout Christmas if necessary.

The general appealed to troops to support the government, saying army "adventurists" seeking to grab power would only deliver the country to communism.

"If the Armed Forces is destroyed by these new misguided elements ... the nation will be pitiful because then the communists will take over," he said.

De Villa said most of the country's 160,000-strong regular army were loyal. He dismissed warnings from Aquino's intelligence chief that up to 70 per cent of the military would stay neutral in another attempt.

Aquino said the coup attempt damaged the economy and foreign investors are having second thoughts on putting their money in the Philippines.

DAY BY DAY

AS if to add more misery to the existing disunity in the Arab world, even the exit and entry stamps on the passports are bigger than the page of the passport itself.

If the aim is to strictly scrutinise people moving between Arab countries, it is certainly an uncivilised method.

Our only consolation is that in the Arab world, chasing and following individuals is carried out secretly, publicly and at all venues.

Zahed Matar

ARAB TIMES

Grand Bingo

Mr. Samuel James has won the Third Full House prize. He will receive KD 40. The answer to the clue is 22.

Tigers after power

Only Tamil force worth reckoning

IRUTHAYAPURAM, Sri Lanka, Dec 17, (AP): The frightened faces of schoolboy militiamen peered from the windows of a bus commandeered by grinning warriors no older than the captives.

The red and grey state-owned bus chugging down a narrow lane past the Church of the Sacred Heart was the only sign of the existence of a Sri Lankan government. But the bus, like the village of Iruthayapuram and the neighbouring town of Batticaloa, was under the control of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam after a raid in which an estimated 100 people died.

The raid, launched shortly before midnight last Tuesday, was a move by the Tigers to demonstrate that they are the only Tamil force worth reckoning with — militarily or politically — in northeastern Sri Lanka, where most members of their ethnic minority live.

Several senior leaders of the Tigers, unlike their young disciples, have put away their camouflage uniforms to negotiate with government officials in Colombo for political power.

But the transition from jungle guerrilla force to political party is being conducted as much with machine-guns and mortars as much as it is with note pads and pens around tables in the capital.

"The armed struggle is a means to achieve a political end," the Tigers' chief negotiator, Anton Balasingham, said in an interview in Colombo. "We are not laying down our guns. We have our weapons as long as this problem is there."

The Sri Lankan government, which is controlled by the island's Sinhalese majority, vacated any claims to control of the Batticaloa district 21-2 years ago. It acknowledged it is virtually unable to halt the Tamil power struggle.



A 14-year-old of TNA member rests. (Reuters wirephoto)

Asked what the Sri Lankan Armed Forces could or should be doing to prevent the Tamil violence over rival claims to power, Foreign Minister Ranjan Wijeratne, who is also the deputy defence minister, said in an interview in Colombo: "So do you want us to go and kill all the people? We have deliberately restrained ourselves. Let good sense prevail."

He blamed the departing Indian Peacekeeping Force for "arming the teeth" the Tamil National Army, which was created by pro-Indian Tamils shortly before the Indians withdrew from the Batticaloa area.

India has repeatedly denied training or arming the Tamil National Army, despite assertions to the contrary by the Sri Lankan government, families of teenagers conscripted by the militia and several long-time Batticaloa residents.

Unleashing the Sri Lankan army to quell the Tamil rivalry could lead to a repeat of the ethnic war that prompted India to intervene in the first place.

The Sri Lankan government army, according to Wijeratne, is 99 per cent

Sinhalese. Nationwide, 75 per cent of the 16 million Sri Lankans are Sinhalese, while 18 per cent are Tamils. Most Sinhalese are Buddhists, while most Tamils are Hindus, but there are Christians in each group.

The Sinhalese domination in the government touched off the Tamil separatist revolt in 1983. The Tigers and an array of other Tamil militias, alternately allying and feuding with each other, demanded a separate nation — or at least autonomy — to preserve the language, culture and economic opportunities of their people.

The guerrilla war soon escalated into terrorist attacks and massacres of Sinhalese civilians. The Sri Lankan Armed Forces, although unequipped for all-out war, responded with heavy force that included pitching barrels packed with explosives cut of their light transport airplanes.

At least 11,000 people have died in the six years of the Tamil revolt, including 1,100 of the Indians who intervened at the instigation of their own politically powerful Tamil minority.

The Indian force, which started arriving July 30, 1987, is now withdrawing under an accord reached with former Indian prime minister Rajiv Gandhi.

At a news conference Friday, new Indian Prime Minister V. P. Singh reiterated his government's determination to withdraw Indian peacekeeping troops from Sri Lanka, but appeared to evade questions on whether the pullout would be completed by the end of the year, as earlier agreed.

India helped set in motion a political formula for granting a measure of autonomy to the Tamils, but failed in its mission to disarm the Tigers.

India has a new chief justice

By M.C. Bose
Business editor

JUSTICE Sabyasachi Mukharji will be the next chief justice of India. Justice Mukharji will succeed Justice E.S. Venkataramiah who retires on Dec 18 on attaining the age of 65.

Official sources in New Delhi told the Arab Times in a telephone interview that Mukharji's appointment was announced on Wednesday by President's secretary.

Seniority-wise Mukharji was just after Justice Venkataramiah, who was appointed as chief justice of India in June this year after Justice R.S. Pathak was elected judge of the International Court of Justice at the Hague.

Mukharji will be the chief justice for more than two and a half years. He will retire on June 1, 1992.

Mukharji began his practice as a lawyer in Calcutta High Court on Nov 23, 1949 and became permanent judge on July 31, 1968. He joined the Supreme Court as a judge on March 15, 1983.

Meanwhile, T.N. Pandey has been appointed as the chairman of the Central Board of Direct Taxes, replacing A.S. Thind who earlier superseded Pandey during Rajiv's regime.

Bhaskar Ghosh, who was the director-general of Doordarshan, has been the additional secretary for Doordarshan, H.K.L. Bhagat, the former information and broadcasting minister removed Ghosh from the post of add. secy.

Official sources told the Arab Times the Planning Commission will meet in New Delhi, today (Monday) to discuss formulation of the annual plan for 1990-91. The department of industrial development.

According to the sources, the DID is giving the maximum importance to the establishment of growth centres and subsidy for backward areas. Detailed discussions are expected to be held on the subjects with Planning Commission in view of the importance being attached to them. Senior officials in charge of different sections in the Industry Ministry have been requested to prepare detailed papers on the subjects to be covered during the discussion.

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Speaker's election tomorrow

Indian Lok Sabha meets today

By Thomas Abraham
Arab Times correspondent

NEW DELHI, Dec 17: India's ninth Lok Sabha meets tomorrow in what promises to be a brief but interesting opening session.

The highlight of the session will be the vote of confidence that Prime Minister V. P. Singh will seek Thursday. President Ramaswamy Venkataraman, who invited Singh to form the new government after last month's general elections, had directed him to prove his majority in the house within 30 days.

Singh, though heading a minority government, should have no difficulty in passing the test. The ruling National Front has 144 seats in the 525-member house, besides, it enjoys the support of at least 140 other members, including

those of the Bharatiya Janata Party and the leftist parties. While the Lok Sabha session begins tomorrow, the Rajya Sabha (upper house) will meet on Wednesday. Both houses are expected to be in session till Dec 29. On Wednesday, Venkataraman will address a joint session of both houses in the central hall of Parliament.

For the first time, the President's address will be televised live to audience around the country.

This will be the first time that any parliamentary proceeding will be telecast in India. In recent weeks, there have been demands from several quarters that proceedings in both houses should be shown on television as is being done in countries like the United Kingdom. But it is unlikely that this demand will be accepted.

Kashmir rebels threaten terror

RAWALPINDI, Dec 17, (AP): Militant Muslim separatists, who traded an Indian cabinet minister's daughter for five of their jailed colleagues, vowed to continue hitting Indian targets in the disputed Jammu-Kashmir state, a leader said today.

Amrullah Khan, chairman of the Pakistan-based Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front, said the separatists will wage an 18-month-old campaign of terror, including hijackings, killings and more kidnappings.

The front, was formed in 1965, wants Jammu-Kashmir to secede from India and either become independent or join Pakistan. The northwestern Indian state is part of a larger Kashmir, which was split into two parts after 1948, with half under India's control and half under Pakistan's.

The front's underground guerrilla force operating in India-controlled Jammu-Kashmir has been given guidelines by the organisation's leaders, Khan told a news conference.

"They have been told: Don't touch our own people, but hit Indian property, including airlines, post offices, public buildings," said Khan. "There have been dozens and dozens of bomb blasts" in the Indian state during the past 18 months, he said.

Basically our military needs are being met," Khan said. The front leader said his organisation has been receiving weapons, but declined to specify the types of arms. "The sophistication of our weapons has been growing with the passage of time," he said.

Pakistan has twice gone to war with India over Kashmir, which is India's only Muslim-dominated state. The majority of India's 880 million people are Hindus.

Last week Rabia Saeed, a medical intern at a Srinagar hospital and the youngest daughter of Home Minister Mufti Mohammad Saeed, was released after five days in captivity. She was exchanged for five Muslim militants.

Khan said his group's military initiatives could run counter to Pakistan's recent attempts to improve traditionally hostile relations with India.

"If they (Pakistanis) have good relations with India at the cost of Kashmir, we are never going to accept it," he said.

Pakistan has pushed for the implementation of the 1972 Simla agreement, named for the Indian city where it was signed by Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's father, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, and his counterpart Indira Gandhi.

Khan's organisation rejects the pact because it calls for settlement of the Kashmir issue through negotiations between India and Pakistan.

Pak toll rises to 21 Riots continue

KARACHI, Dec 17, (UPI): Armed youths fought with members of rival ethnic groups and police yesterday in violence that left eight people dead and 10 injured, police said.

The incidents brought to 21 dead and more than 60 injured the casualty toll from five days of unrest in Hyderabad, 80 miles (140 km) northeast of the southern Pakistan port city of Karachi.

The latest violence involving native Sindhis and Mohajir migrants from India came despite a shoot-on-sight curfew enforced by troops since Wednesday in much of the city.

Police said four people were shot and killed and 10 others injured in separate incidents of communal violence.

Later, parliamentary rangers were forced to open fire after being threatened by armed members of a funeral procession, killing four people, police said.

Police, speaking on the usual condition of anonymity, said unidentified gunmen defied the 24-hour curfew yesterday, killed two gas station attendants and fled. A third man apparently was the victim of a rooftop sniper, they said.

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Freeway justice no easy stunt for stuntmen

LOS ANGELES, Dec 17, (UPI): It usually happens this way: a motorist is travelling in the fast lane when someone behind him blares the horn and flashes the brights. The car in front of him hits the brakes. Suddenly, there's glass on the

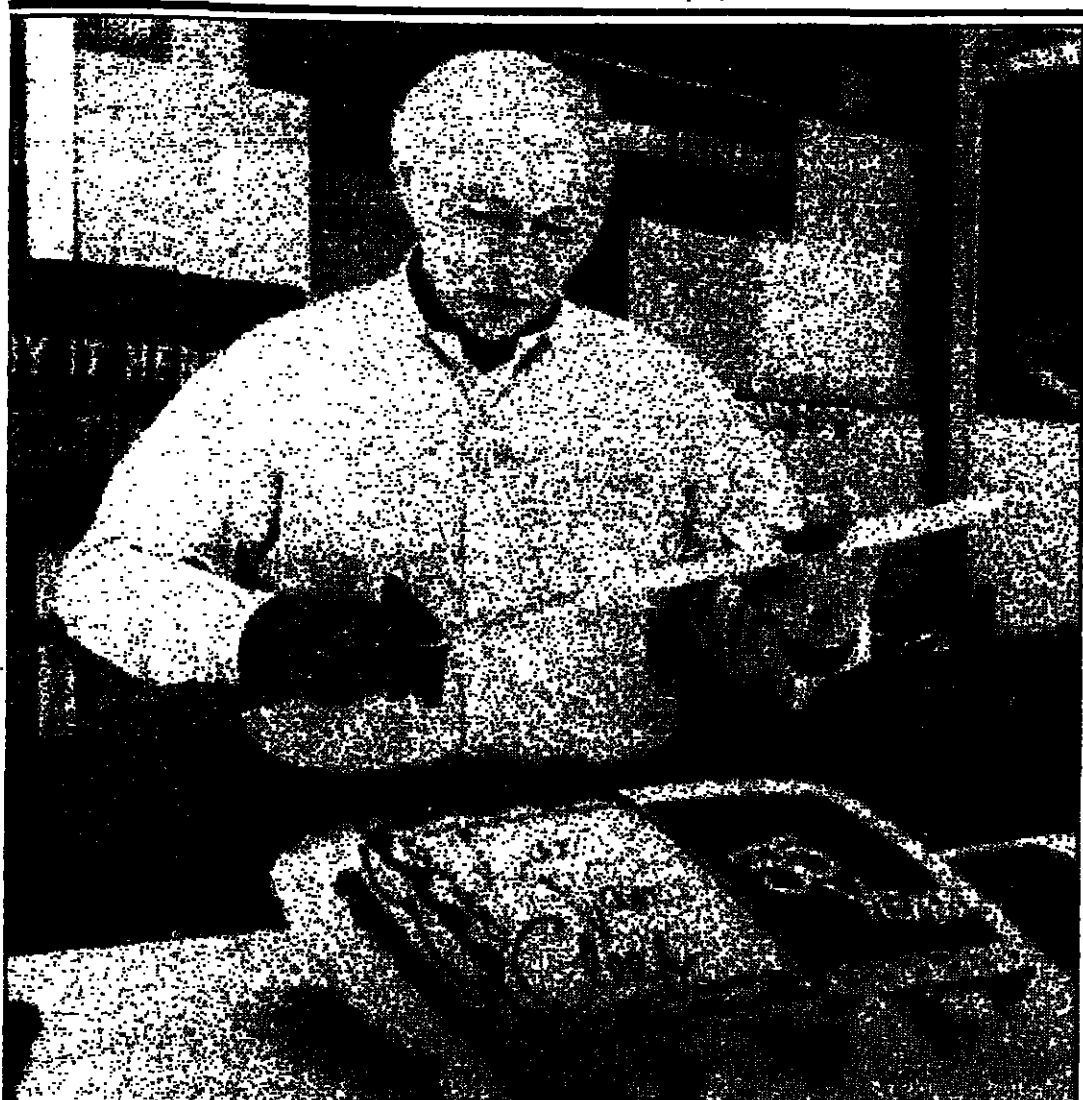
pavement, a traffic jam and a fraudulent lawsuit in the works. It was all planned. The motorist who blared the horn and the one who hit the brakes were working together in what police call a 'freeway ram scam.' The guy behind — and sometimes a

third co-conspirator — will eventually testify that the hapless motorist in the middle did the ramming, was going too fast and wasn't watching, maybe weaving in and out of traffic. If lawmen smell a 'ram scam,' they know who to call — professional stunt

drivers. Jack Gill, president of the International Stunt Association, says the organisation is seeing a growing trend in the use of stunt professionals to settle car insurance scams like this in the courtroom.

"Very often, members of our organisation are called in by the CHP (California Highway Patrol), insurance fraud units and other enforcement agencies to restage suspicious vehicular accidents," said Gill. "Investigations like this work like

forensic medicine. You work backward from the real evidence you have. An investigator, for example, can look at a dent and determine how fast cars were going when they hit." Sometimes, re-enacting an accident can yield surprising results.



Van Cleef shown on the set of his NBC-TV show "The Master" in which he celebrated his 35 years in show business. (Reuter wirephoto)

Gunslinger of Western movies

Lee van Cleef dies

OXNARD, California, Dec 17, (AP): Actor Lee van Cleef, whose steely eyes and hawklike features won him a long career portraying villains in Western movies, has died of an apparent heart attack, authorities said. He was 64.

Van Cleef's film-break came when he was cast as one of four desperadoes faced down by Gary Cooper in the 1952 movie "High Noon." He became a familiar gunslinger in so-called spaghetti Westerns made by Italian director Sergio Leone, including "The Good, The Bad and The Ugly."

Among his hundreds of black-hat roles were parts in "How the West Was Won," "The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance" and "Death Rides a Horse."

Van Cleef collapsed at his Oxnard home on Friday night, said Craig Stevens, a Ventura County deputy coroner. The coastal community is north of Los Angeles.

The actor's wife, Barbara, called paramedics and he was taken to St. John's regional medical centre in

Oxnard, where he was pronounced dead early yesterday, Stevens said.

"It's an apparent heart attack," Stevens said. "He's got a history of heart disease. He had a permanent pacemaker."

In 1968, Van Cleef's health problems were attributed to his gunslinger-casting in some 350 television movies and motion pictures to his predator's nose.

"I didn't speak a word in 'High Noon,' he recalled. "In 1951 Stanley and Earl Kramer saw me in a play, 'Mr. Roberts,' and offered me the role eventually played by Lloyd Bridges in the film, providing I would have my nose fixed. I refused and wound up as one of the four villains."

"Now, people remember this break," he said. Born in 1925 of Dutch ancestry in Somerville, NJ, Van Cleef dropped out of high school to join the Navy, where he served on submarine chasers and minesweepers. He was discharged in 1946.

Volcano fallout alerts Alaska

ANCHORAGE, Alaska, Dec 17, (AP): A slight wind shift has brought a haze of ash from Redoubt volcano drifting down on Alaska's largest city and the Kenai peninsula, triggering health alerts.

The volcano, 115 miles (186 kms) southwest of Anchorage, quieted down somewhat in its third day of activity yesterday, but still belched ash skyward.

The volcano southwest of Anchorage began erupting on Thursday, awakening from a 23-year sleep.

Geologist Tom Miller of the US Geological Survey said Redoubt went through an ash-spewing "tremor" for just over an hour Saturday morning and experienced another one later in the day.

"Our assumption would be that this would be going on like it is for a period of several days," Miller said.

Until the wind shift, the fallout had been bypassing this city of about 250,000 residents. The Kenai peninsula south of Anchorage also had escaped the mess, but the peninsula towns of Soldotna and Nikiski seemed to get the worst of it Saturday.

"I'm looking out my bedroom window and it looks like I'm standing on a beach," said Linell McCrumb of Soldotna, across Cook inlet from Redoubt. She said about a half-inch (1.25 cms) of coarse ash covered the ground. "It was incredibly dark," McCrumb said. She said the ash cloud was so thick she couldn't see the sunrise.

Meanwhile, pilots reported ash from the volcano in the skies over the western US states of Idaho, Washington and Oregon at altitudes of between 3 and 1-2 to 8 miles (5 and 1-2 to 12 kms).

The ash was expected to continue moving southward, reaching the states of Utah, Nevada, California and Arizona by Sunday morning, the national weather service predicted.

"Ashfall is very heavy," Kenai peninsula state trooper dispatcher Dottie Ayer said in Soldotna. "Our troopers have to keep coming in periodically to change the air filters in their cars."

Ash caused scattered power outages and at least one fire. Central peninsula general hospital in Soldotna used an emergency generator for power.

The Soldotna police department told people to stay indoors, and an advisory issued by the state included a recommendation that people with lung ailments not venture outdoors.

Police advised people not to use their cars in order to limit the chance of engine damage from ash. Some businesses covered sensitive computers and other equipment for fear ash would filter into buildings.

Anchorage international airport stayed open, but "we're getting very little traffic in or out," said Sgt Charles Barton, an airport safety officer.

He had no estimate of how many carriers had cancelled or diverted flights.

Mechanics planned to inspect a Boeing 747 airliner that made a safe emergency landing at the airport Friday after it flew through ash, lost power to all four engines and fell more than two miles (3.2 kms).

The engines of the KLM Royal Dutch Airlines jet with 245 people aboard were restarted before the landing. There were no reports of injuries, the Federal Aviation Administration said.

Meanwhile, ash settled on insulators and lines, knocking out power to about 15,000 to 20,000 Homer Electric Association customers early in the morning, said John Sorrels, an area superintendent for the utility.

"We've got all of our crews out working, but it's hard for them to breathe and see," even with masks and goggles, Sorrels said.

Power was restored promptly in some places, but outages continued to occur, he said.

Judge assassinated

Bogota link seen in blast

MOUNTAIN BROOK, Alabama, Dec 17, (AP): A federal appeals judge was killed and his wife seriously injured by a mail bomb that went off at their home yesterday afternoon, authorities said and authorities said possible links with Colombian drug activity were under investigation.

Eleventh US circuit court of appeals judge Robert S. Vance, 58, died instantly when a package delivered to his home went off around 3 pm (1900 GMT). FBI spokesman Chuck Steinmetz said in Washington.

It was believed to be only the third time this century a US federal judge had been assassinated.

"Attorney General Dick Thornburgh and FBI director William Sessions tonight expressed outrage" over the slaying, Steinmetz said, reading from a statement.

The judge's wife, Helen, was hospitalized in serious condition with lacerations and internal injuries.

The FBI, postal service investigators, the US Marshal and local authorities were investigating the blast, said US Attorney Frank Donaldson. He added



Filephoto of Vance who was killed in the blast. (Reuter wirephoto)

that the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms might also become involved.

State Attorney General Don Siegelman told staff members to "dedicate every resource of this office to find the perpetrators."

US Sen. Howell Heflin of Alabama said officials were "greatly alarmed over his death and we wonder why."

"As a member of the 11th circuit court of appeals, they heard many appeal cases related to drugs from Miami," Heflin said

in an interview from his home in Tusculum. "There's speculation in that regard, but nobody knows."

Gov. Guy Hunt called the attack "a cowardly thing" and "an affront against civilisation, against our form of government."

Vance was appointed to the federal bench in 1978 by former President Jimmy Carter.

During the 1960s and 1970s, he was chairman of the State Democratic Party, Heflin said.

Scientists confirm 'miracle'

'Liquid is saint's blood'

NAPLES, Italy, Dec 17, (Reuter): Scientists said yesterday their tests had confirmed that a substance venerated in Naples as a relic of the city's patron saint is blood.

The congealed substance, which Neapolitans believe is the blood of fourth century martyr St Januarius, is held in two small phials in the church of Santa Chiara.

It liquefies two or three times a year after prayers in the church. Neapolitans say this has happened for the past 600 years and they believe that if the miracle fails to occur a disaster could strike the city.

"There is no doubt that the liquid is blood," said Pierluigi Ballone, a University scientist heading a team which was able to study the substance without removing it from the phials.

Copter breaks hovering record

ANAHEIM, California, Dec 17, (UPI): With eggs taped to each wheel, to attest to its efforts, a 43-year-old helicopter hovered 50 hours in the parking lot of Anaheim stadium to raise \$200,000 for charity and set a US national hovering record.

The two-seat Bell 47-B broke an unofficial record set in the 1930s by the US Navy, when it finally settled back to earth at 4:40 pm PST Friday (0040 GMT yesterday).

Tumours linked with pot smoking

CLEARWATER, Florida, Dec 17, (AP): Marijuana smoking was the common link among a number of otherwise healthy young people who developed large, fast-growing cancerous tumours of the mouth and neck, two doctors have reported. This was a rather shocking finding, said Dr Paul Donald, a head and neck surgeon at the University of California-Davis, who noticed the link in nine of his patients.

The patients included one man with a tumour bulging from his mouth to his chin, a woman with a tumour under her tongue and a man with a huge mass on the side of his neck. Donald told a meeting of immunologists in Clearwater on Friday.

The surgeon said he had seen such cancers before among people in their 60s who had been heavy drinkers and cigarette smokers for decades.

But the patients he treated had an average age of 27. One was just 19.

All had smoked marijuana during a tour of duty in Vietnam. Some had smoked as few as two or three marijuana cigarettes a week, others as many as six or eight a day, he said. The tumours in most cases were huge and fast growing. Donald said, adding that he had to remove the jaws of several patients. Some lost part or all of their tongue.

One patient who smoked marijuana heavily in Vietnam died, but so far the others are doing well, he said.

Donald said he cannot prove that marijuana is the culprit in these cases. But if it's not, he said, it's quite a coincidence.

Sharing his concern was Dr James Endicott, chairman of otolaryngology at the University of South Florida in Tampa.

Although there is no conclusive evidence that marijuana caused the tumours, "there's something seriously wrong here," Endicott said. "It's a phenomenon," he said, "and it's scary."

Some of the cases he and Donald have elected go back to the mid-1970s. Endicott said he polled doctors in the Tampa area and found about 50 patients under 40 with fast-growing head and neck tumours. All of those interviewed so far said they had smoked marijuana, he said.

A university research team is doing laboratory studies on patients' tumour cells as part of a study that seeks to establish a cause of the cancers.

PEOPLE AND PLACES

NEW YORK: Author Nicholas Gage says his writing skills were unleashed in a chance encounter with a salty-tongued teacher when he was a struggling, 13-year-old refugee.

Gage writes in Parade magazine how as a seventh-grader he met Marjorie Hurd Rabinson in Worcester, Mass.

Told to choose a hobby, Gage said he "decided to follow the prettiest girl in my class — the blue-eyed daughter of the local Lutheran minister."

"She led me through the door marked 'newspaper club' and into the presence of Miss Hurd, the newspaper adviser and English teacher who would become my mentor and my muse."

Gage wrote an essay for the school paper about his mother, who was killed by communists during the Greek civil war. Hurd sent it to the freedoms foundation and won a medal. (AP)

NEW YORK: Crooner Julie Iglesias has sold \$150 million records world-wide and makes \$22 million a year, yet there's one thing he still wants: To become one of America's greatest idols.

"America has only five great stars, and all except one are dead: Elvis, Marilyn Monroe, John Kennedy, James Dean and Frank Sinatra," Iglesias said in a recent interview.

Iglesias, 46, hopes to join their ranks, but first he had to learn the language. In his efforts to become fluent in English, Iglesias has worked with a Hollywood speech coach for the past six years.

The results? "Now I understand the news and jokes on Saturday Night Live," said Iglesias, who has recorded duets with Willie Nelson and Diana Ross. (AP)

INGLEWOOD, California: Entertainer Steve Wender will headline a concert to raise education funds for inner city areas plagued by street gangs and drugs.

Wender has signed on for the benefit that boasts an all-star supporting lineup led by singer Vikki Carr.

Comedian and TV star Shalash of NBC's "A Different World" will host the Jan 6 event, "Rejoice in Los Angeles."

A celebrity choir including Miss Carr, Barry Bostwick, Clifton Davis, Maria Gable, Danny Glover, Robert Guillaume, Louis Gossett Jr., Edward James Olmos and Charles Tinsell will sing a grand finale.

Proceeds will go to the Inner City Foundation for excellence in education, a non-profit group that seeks to raise funds to educate Inner-City children of Los Angeles. (AP)

INDIANAPOLIS: Former Olympic gymnastics champion Olga Korbut has been campaigning to raise money for a group bringing young leukemia victims from the Soviet Union.

The first of the Soviet children, 5-year-old Irina Cherkashova, is expected to arrive in Indianapolis within two weeks, said Mary Maxwell, a spokeswoman for Riley Children's Hospital.

Irina became sick apparently because of exposure to high levels of radiation from the 1986 accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant. She may undergo a bone marrow transplant, Maxwell said.

emergency fund for children foundation, created in July to locate and help children around the world suffering from grave ailments. (AP)

KARASJOK, Norway: Nobel Peace Prize winner the Dalai Lama braved extreme cold to visit the reindeer herding Lapps of the Arctic Norway.

The exiled religious and political leader of Tibet called the visit to the north the high point of his trip to Norway, where he received the peace prize. The Buddhist monk, usually clad in thin robes, bundled himself in thicker cloth and donned sturdy Western-style shoes for below zero weather.

Lapps and Tibetans have much in common, he said, including a deep respect for nature. The Lapps, traditionally nomadic herders, are a tiny majority in northern Scandinavia and the Soviet Union.

LOS ANGELES: Celebrities Barbara Walters, Perry Como and Carroll O'Connor head the latest list of inductees into the academy of Television Arts and Sciences Hall of Fame.

Also chosen were ABC network executive Roone Arledge, children's television workshop co-founder Jeann Goss, and Don Hewitt, the producer of CBS' "60 minutes."

Dance master Fred Astaire, whose laurels included three Emmys, was chosen for posthumous induction.

The seven will be inducted during Jan 7 ceremonies here and the event will be broadcast as a two-hour special Jan 24 on the Fox Network. O'Connor, an Emmy winner as Archie Bunker in the long-running "All in the Family" and "Archie Bunker's Place" TV shows, currently stars in the series "In the Heat of the Night."

Pope warns against legalising of unwed couples

VATICAN CITY, Dec 17, (UPI): Pope John Paul II warned yesterday that laws that put unmarried couples on the same level as regular families "would not contribute to personal and social well-being."

"It is one thing to guarantee the rights of individuals and another to present disorders as a situation which is in itself good and right," John Paul said.

The Pope was addressing Catholic lawyers attending a national convention in Rome during a special audience in the Vatican.

"The well-being of the human community is closely bound to the health of the family institution," the Pope said, calling for more laws that protect the family.

"It would not contribute to personal and social well-being to introduce laws that would claim to recognise as legitimate, putting them on the same level as the natural family founded on matrimony, factual unions which do not involve any responsibility and any guarantee of stability," the Pope said.

He said responsibility and stability were

"essential elements in the union between man and woman, as was intended by God the Creator and confirmed by Christ the redeemer."

"To give a charter of legal citizenship to forms of living together different from the legitimate family founded on matrimony, apart from the confusion caused on the level of principles, would make a direct contribution to the formation of a mentality and living customs devoid of any reference to the basic and founding values of the family."

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The bodies of Rodriguez Gacha (foreground) and his bodyguards, lie in the town of Covenas. (Reuter wirephoto)



Rodriguez Gacha, in a file photo, wearing a soccer uniform at his home town of Pachó. (Reuter wirephoto)

Drug lord buried in mass grave

Bush hails Gacha killing as 'courageous action'

BOGOTA, Dec 17, (Reuter): Colombian drug baron Jose Gonzalo Rodriguez Gacha, who rose from poverty to the number two man in the world's most powerful drug organisation, was buried yesterday in a common grave with his teenage son and five bodyguards, all killed in a gun battle with police.

Rodriguez Gacha, 42, his son and his bodyguards were shot dead on Friday after resisting arrest by hurling grenades and spraying machine-gun fire when cornered near Tolu on the Caribbean coast. They were buried in a hastily-dug common grave in the municipal cemetery in the nearby state capital of Sincelejo without relatives present, television footage showed.

"There was no one who came forth to claim the bodies," police agent Jose Sanchez said in explaining why the bodies were buried far from the drug lord's stronghold and birthplace in the picturesque red-tiled roofed town of Pachó near Bogota, where he was born into a poor peasant family.

The killing of Rodriguez Gacha was the government's biggest blow against the cocaine barons since the administration of President Virgilio Barco launched its anti-

narcotics offensive four months ago.

US President George Bush, who last August ordered \$65 million in emergency aid to back Barco, hailed the killing of Rodriguez Gacha as a "courageous action."

"I was delighted when the Colombian government brought to bay the man who I think is ranked as the third most prominent narco-terrorist in Colombia," he said from the Caribbean island of St. Martin, where he was meeting French President Francois Mitterrand.

In Bogota, the head of the country's security and intelligence agency, General Miguel Angel Maza Marquez told a news conference that Rodriguez Gacha was the second highest leader in the Medellin cocaine cartel.

Police said that they learned early this week that Rodriguez Gacha and his son Freddy, who was variously reported to be 17, 18 or 19 years old, were in the Caribbean resort of Cartagena, where coincidentally Bush is to attend an anti-drug summit on Feb 15 with three South American presidents.

From there they left by motorboat to

Tolu, about 110 km (70 miles) to the south, where they hid in a nearby ranch, General Octavio Vargas Silva, the national police's inspector-general said.

On Friday afternoon, after Rodriguez Gacha and his son saw two police helicopter gunships overhead, they fled to a nearby natural gas storage centre from where they dispersed in different directions, he said.

"When police followed them, they were repelled by grenades and firearms which made it necessary for the police to use their arms," a police statement in Sincelejo said.

He added that the drug lord's five bodyguards were members of a leftist guerrilla group, Ricardo Franco. The rebel group was formed in 1983 when as a hardline dissident faction it broke away from Colombia's biggest leftist guerrilla group, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia.

Vargas Silva said that in a cabin near where the gun battle took place, police found a safe holding valuable documents that could be used to track other traffickers.

Security forces are on heightened alert

against any increase in terrorism by drug traffickers angry over the killing of Gacha.

Military officials stationed armoured cars along several of Bogota's main avenues and beefed up army checkpoints.

Police and army troops remained on alert as President Barco consulted with his security advisers.

"Naturally we've taken security measures to prevent any kind of retaliation," Interior Minister Carlos Lemos said in a radio interview.

Police Chief Gen. Maza had warned that terrorism might increase as a result of Gacha's death.

Although he called the killing a triumph for the government, he said the drug war was far from won.

Officials blame traffickers for 203 bombings that have killed 199 people since the drug lords declared "total war" on the government last August in retaliation for Barco's policy of extraditing drug suspects to the United States.

Maza said authorities are pursuing Colombia's top drug baron, Pablo Escobar, with renewed optimism after their success in tracking down Gacha.

1st presidential polls in 29 years

Brazilians vote for change

RIO DE JANEIRO, Dec 17, (Agencies): From the holiday beaches of Copacabana to the depths of the Amazon jungle, 82 million Brazilians began voting in presidential elections today for the first time in 29 years.

Tired of inflation, dwindling salaries and corruption in government, Latin America's biggest country is voting for change.

The choice is between centre-right populist Fernando Collor de Mello, 40, and leftist Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, 44, who represent a new political generation for a disillusioned society.

In November's first round, voters chose the two new faces, rejecting candidates linked to outgoing President Jose Sarney.

Many analysts say the 1980s have been a lost decade for Brazil with inflation soaring and poverty worsening. Prices shot up 44 per cent in November and hyper-inflation is imminent.

The minimum wage buys less than in 1940 and two-thirds of voters earn less than \$100 a month. In the world's eighth biggest market economy, the gap between the rich and poor is the widest of any country.

"This time it's our turn. It's for real," said Joana Andrade, an enthusiastic first-time voter at the age of 43.

Three-quarters of the voters have never elected a president before. Apart from those too young to vote in the last election in 1960, 16-year-olds and illiterates vote for the first time.

For over two decades Brazil's presidents were handpicked by the military or chosen by an electoral college in which the military set the rules.

But today, Brazil completes a transition to democracy begun after the end of 21 years of military rule in 1985.

Brazilians from all walks of life celebrated the vote with an enthusiasm normally reserved for carnivals or soccer, where the poor traditionally seek refuge from the miseries of daily life.

Polling booths opened at 8 am (1000 GMT) and were due to close at 5 pm (1900 GMT). Counting begins immediately and unofficial predictions are expected soon afterwards.

Final official figures are not expected before Tuesday.

At Copacabana beach Lula fans danced and paraded in cars festooned with red and white banners carrying the 'Workers' Party star symbol.

A pre-vote opinion poll issued yesterday showed Lula, a former metalworker and strike leader, with 46 per cent and Collor, a handsome black-belt karate expert with an anti-corruption platform, with 47.

With a two-point error margin, this points to a neck-and-neck race.

The contrast between the contestants could not be greater.

Collor grew up in a traditional rich family, surrounded by uniformed maids, in Brazil's backward northeast.

Lula too comes from the northeast but from the other side of the tracks. Like millions of other poor northeasters, his family fled to the big city in search of opportunity.

Both candidates have fought to win the decisive vote of the poor, visiting garbage-strewn hillside slums and promising more cash for education, health and housing.

But analysts say they are unlikely to reconcile voters' hopes with the measures needed to put the economy on course. It is not clear how either will cope with runaway inflation, a huge internal debt and the developing world's biggest foreign debt.

In the first round, Collor de Mello beat Da Silva by nine million votes. Polls in November showed him sure winner in the showdown.

But since then, support for Da Silva, backed by massive, wild street rallies, has increased, while backing for Collor has fallen. Polls now say the race is a virtual deadlock.

"I'm convinced more than ever that I'll win the election by three to four per cent of the votes," Da Silva told a news conference yesterday at headquarters of the Sao Bernardo Do Campo Metalworkers Union on the outskirts of Sao Paulo.

"We want socialism with democracy," Da Silva said. Collor, founded his center-right National Reconstruction Party just 10 months ago.

The scion of a wealthy political clan in the tiny sugar cane-growing state of Alagoas in the impoverished northeast, Collor won tremendous popularity with promises to clean up corrupt government.



Brazilian presidential candidate Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva cast his vote in Sao Paulo. (Reuter wirephoto)

Billionaire hijacked

Held for ransom

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil, Dec 17, (UPI): Suspected Chilean gunmen held a "kidnapped" billionaire for a huge ransom yesterday and were keeping police at bay by threatening to kill the Brazilian business magnate, police said.

The abductors demanded millions of dollars and safe exit from the South American nation in exchange for the release of Abilio Diniz, chairman and principal stockholder of Pao de Acucar, a Brazilian international conglomerate, a police source said. Diniz, 52, was kidnapped on Monday.

Officers had surrounded the gunman's hideout in the Jabaquara neighbourhood of Sao Paulo, 270 miles (435 km) southwest of Rio de Janeiro, and were negotiating with the gunmen, who threatened to kill Diniz if police attacked, according to sources.

Two shots from inside the two-storey safehouse were heard late in the afternoon but there were no immediate reports of injuries, witnesses said.

Police negotiators asked the gunmen to surrender. Television stations broadcast long-distance scenes of anti-kidnapping

specialists standing on a wall and shouting to the gunmen through a second-floor window.

The kidnappers, believed to be Chilean and Argentine, belong to a Chilean rebel organisation, the Leftist Revolutionary Movement, Sao Paulo state security secretary Luis Antonio Fleury Filho and federal police Director-general Romeu Tuma told reporters.

A police source said the kidnappers originally demanded \$36 million "for the benefit of the guerrilla movement." But they later modified their demands to ask for an unspecified amount of money, an armoured car and an airplane for escape after the business magnate was freed, the source said.

"We told them they could not have the armoured car they asked for — and even less, the airplane they asked for — if they took hostages with them," Fleury told reporters.

The sources said Diniz was kidnapped on Monday. His family kept the kidnapping a secret until yesterday, when police said they discovered his whereabouts after they captured and interrogated six Chilean suspects, two men and a woman.

Murder probe

UK ready to help Kenya

LONDON, Dec 17, (AP): Scotland Yard officers are willing to go to Kenya to help investigate the murder of a British tourist killed in a game park last year, the Foreign Office and police said today.

Kenya's President Daniel Arap Moi requested British assistance in the Julie Ward case when he met Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd during a recent private visit to London, the Foreign Office said.

Hurd replied favourably, and is waiting for a formal request from Kenya's attorney general, a spokesman said, speaking anonymously in keeping with British custom.

Scotland Yard said today "we are willing to comply" with such a request. Ms Ward's partly charred remains were found Sept 13, 1988, in the sprawling Masai Mara Game Reserve, a week after she reportedly left the world-renowned park. Partly burned personal effects and ashes were found near her remains, 6 miles (10 kilometres) from her abandoned vehicle.

For months, Kenyan authorities insisted she had been killed by wild animals. But in October, an inquest ruled she had been murdered.

Chief Justice Joseph Mango said at the time he saw no reason to direct the attorney general's office to investigate her death further and rejected claims by Ms Ward's family that the state had engaged in a coverup either to protect her murderer or Kenya's lucrative tourist industry.

Ms Ward's father, John, welcomed the request for Scotland Yard's help, but said today he was sceptical about whether his daughter's killer would be found.

"The decision to send Scotland Yard men is potentially a move in the right direction," said Ward, a wealthy hotel owner who has spent thousands of pounds (dollars) and hundreds of hours trying to prove his daughter was murdered.

"Until I know what is to be done I view the news with some reservations. I am a little sceptical. It could simply be a cosmetic exercise on the part of the Kenyan authorities."

Ward has maintained that Simon Makallah, the Masai Mara's chief game warden, knows more about his daughter's death than he has revealed.

"I think whoever murdered Julie is still there to be found," he said today.

Denard men quit S. Africa

JOHANNESBURG, Dec 17, (Reuter): Eighteen of the 22 white mercenaries who relinquished power in the Comoros Islands on Friday to French forces have left South Africa for Europe, a Foreign Ministry spokeswoman said today.

The spokeswoman declined to state the destination of the soldiers of fortune, who took control of the Indian Ocean islands after the assassination of president Ahmed Abdallah in mysterious circumstances on Nov 26.

Mercenary leader Bob Denard was one of the four remaining in South Africa, pending the outcome of negotiations on his future, the spokeswoman added. "We anticipate all of the remaining four will be leaving South Africa soon," she said.

Denard and his men flew to Johannesburg on Friday as pressure mounted on them to leave the Comoros amid accusations that they were involved in Abdallah's murder.

Pretoria's Foreign Minister Pk Botha immediately declared that the 22 mercenaries were unwelcome and said they would leave for other countries as quickly as possible.

South Africa, which with France has the strongest foreign influence on the Comoros, said it wanted to keep its involvement with the departing mercenaries as low-key as possible.

Denard's fate is the trickiest. If he returns to France, he risks deportation to the West African state of Benin, where he faces murder charges for his part in an unsuccessful coup attempt.

Denard and his men handed over power in the Comoros last Friday to a French military task force, which is to stay in the islands off the Madagascar Coast for two years to train local security forces.

Newspapers reported that Denard and his men had spent their time since arriving in South Africa having a marathon party.

The Johannesburg Sunday Times said the mercenaries drank cases of champagne and ate tins of Russian caviar which they managed to "liberate" during their retreat from the Comoros.

After the luxury foods ran out, the men switched to South African wines and beer to wash down cold meats and salads.



Violeta Chamorro sharing a laugh with Jimmy Carter. In the middle is former senator Dan Evans, (top) and (bottom) Carter with Ortega. (Reuter wirephoto)

Slaying of Salvadoran Jesuit priests

Church demands the whole truth

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador, Dec 17, (AP): A Jesuit leader declared yesterday that the slaying of six Roman Catholic priests one month ago has demonstrated the severity of the situation in El Salvador.

The Rev. Jose Maria Tojeria, Central American leader of the Society of Jesus, made his comments at a memorial mass. It was presided over by Monsignor Arturo Rivera Damas, archbishop of San Salvador, and 40 other clergymen.

Tojeria said the brutal deaths

of the Jesuits and two others "has been light in the world about the tragedy of the poor in our country."

He added, "They were attacked because they showed through their work and words their evangelical desires for a solution to the Salvadoran conflict."

Armed men killed and mutilated six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper and her daughter Nov 16 after bursting into their house at Jose Simeon Canas Central American University. The

dead priests were all educators at the university.

Witnesses said they saw about 30 men wearing the uniforms of government troops enter the university before dawn and kill the eight victims.

The killings occurred during the strongest attack on San Salvador in a decade of civil war by the leftist Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front.

The government is investigating, but so far has not announced the arrest of anyone associated with the killings.

Pinochet offers help as president-elect begins contacting leaders

SANTIAGO, Dec 17, (UPI): President-elect Patricio Aylwin, the opposition candidate who won the country's first open election in 16 years of military rule, yesterday praised President Augusto Pinochet's offer to help his new administration.

"I find it positive that the President demonstrates his will to collaborate with the new government," Aylwin told reporters.

Pinochet, the 74-year-old general who rose to power in a 1973 coup, made the

offer in a nationwide address last night.

Aylwin, backed by a coalition of 17 opposition political parties, won the Thursday election with 55 per cent of the vote over Pinochet's former finance minister, Hernan Buchi, and businessman Francisco Errazuriz.

Police reported nearly 600 people were detained Friday night in a series of violent clashes in Santiago and three other cities that occurred as the opposition celebrated

its victory.

In Santiago, police battled demonstrators first during the afternoon and then at night after Aylwin appeared at a rally. Thousands of people were marching through the downtown after the rally when the disturbances began.

Provocations were "planned and carried out" by people within the marchers, police said.

Some 300 people were arrested in Vina del Mar, 90 miles (140 km) west of San-

tiago, during violent demonstrations that also led to looting of businesses, police said.

One woman was killed in Temuco, 430 miles (690 km) south of the capital, when she fell off a truck carrying celebrators, police said.

Police repeatedly used water trucks and tear gas to scatter the demonstrators, who blocked traffic on many streets and venues.

EX-110-150



The end section of the reconstructed lower fuselage of the Pan Am jet which crashed last December. (Reuters wirephoto)

Life won't be same again

A year after bombing

Charges possible in Pan Am case

LOCKERBIE, Scotland, Dec 17, (Reuters): A year ago, a resident of Lockerbie stood amid the wreckage of the bombed Pan Am jumbo jet which ripped his town apart and thought that life would never be the same again.

Now this quiet Scottish market town has cleared the rubble and buried its dead. But while the physical damage has been swept under carpets of new soil and fresh layers of paint, the mental scars have proved more difficult to erase.

"They remember the noise. They all remember it in a different way," said chemist Tom Carson. "It is not a noise, a sight or a smell that you can ever forget."

Carson is chairman of the Residents' Association of Sherwood Crescent, ravaged when the main section of the Boeing 747 plunged from the night sky and ploughed into a row of houses.

The crashed jet, hurtling down from an altitude of 31,000 feet (9,500 metres), dug a crater 40 feet (10 metres) deep where houses once stood and its debris burned through the roofs of others.

Bodies
Bodies from the plane on its way from London to New York were flung into the streets and gardens around red sandstone and wooden houses with names like "Rondela" and "Fortia".

The disaster, the worst in British aviation history, killed 259 people in the air and 11 people on the ground.

Since then, the crater has been filled in and damaged roofs refitted. Grass is sprouting on the verge beside the A74 highway linking England and Scotland which runs beside Sherwood.

Across town, a block of flats which partially collapsed when part of the fuselage smashed through, has been rebuilt. Only a commemorative stone beside it will stand as a reminder.

Life is crawling back to normality in Lockerbie and its community of 3,500 people is not looking forward to Dec 21, the first anniversary of the disaster when survivors and relatives of the victims will attend a remembrance service.

The flower vendor is selling Christmas trees but there is much demand for wreaths this week. A granite plaque bearing the names of the victims will be dedicated on Thursday at Dryfesdale cemetery.

Beside a remembrance stone erected by Pan Am, someone has left a bunch of carnations with

the message: "In memory of and sympathy for the victims of this evil deed and their loved ones. From a lucky survivor passing on the A74 at the time."

Some residents fear life will never be the same with a constant stream of visitors and relatives making pilgrimages to Lockerbie.

"There is concern that Lockerbie should not be turned into a shrine," said Gordon Smith, who heads the Lockerbie air disaster appeal fund.

Donations are still pouring in and the fund has collected £2.3 million (\$3.7 million). The library has filed hundreds of sympathy letters in five neat green folders displayed in the modern foyer.

So worried are some residents of the intrusive scrutiny by television cameras that they are being coached on how to deal with the press. Some are leaving town for the duration.

"Pressure is building up now, that the anniversary is close. People want to be left alone now. The hope is that after the 21st, the media will leave and the children will have a Christmas this year," said Gideon Pringle, who helped plan games for children robbed of Christmas last year.

The local school was taken over by police as Lockerbie became headquarters for the biggest mass murder investigation in history.

Debris
From there, Scottish police are linked by satellite with Washington and Frankfurt, where Pan Am flight 103 originated. The inquiry has involved 52 countries.

More than 16,000 items of property were gathered by rescuers and policemen who scoured the hills and lochs around Lockerbie.

Police have given up hope of finding every scrap of evidence scattered around the border counties despite having combed a total 843 square miles (2,190 square km), inspector Tom McCulloch said.

Some debris landed in forested areas and chunks of metal were lodged in tree branches when the plane was broken into five sections by the mid-air blast, which investigators believe was caused by a bomb hidden in a cassette recorder placed in luggage in the forward cargo hold.

The cockpit with the crew still strapped inside landed on a windswept hill near a farmhouse just outside town.

The sheep still cut their hoofs on hidden strips of metal.

LONDON, Dec 17, (AP): A British newspaper reported today that police have gathered enough evidence to charge several suspects in the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103, which occurred one year ago this week.

The Sunday Times of London said the investigators, despite their cautious public stance, have told a secret five-section search of security services that under Scottish law, "charges are now possible against certain persons."

The weekly said Scottish police heading the investigation into the Dec 21, 1988, jumbo jet crash told the summit in Maastricht, West Germany, that because of extradition obstacles, some suspects might have to be tried abroad.

The newspaper did not say when the summit took place, but said it was represented by leaders of the security services in Britain, West Germany, the United States, Sweden and Malta.

It did not identify the source of its information. It quoted a source as saying: "The investigation is now in a phase where charges can be laid. The investigation is now in a phase where charges can be laid. The investigation is now in a phase where charges can be laid."

Scotland's senior law officers on Friday announced the first public inquiry into the bombing but said criminal proceedings were not imminent.

Lord Fraser, the lord advocate said Ahmed Jibril's radical Palestinian group, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command, was among groups under investigation. Jibril has denied any involvement.

The Sunday Times reported that police "have for some time suspected who the killers are, but the painstaking assembly of evidence has been a long task."

It said police were likely to wait until their inquiries are completed in three or four months before starting criminal proceedings.

Airlines and other possible US targets across Western Europe upgraded their security during the weekend after the US State Department warned embassies that Middle Eastern extremists "might be planning near-term attacks."

The newspaper said Scottish police are expected Monday to interview Mohammad Abu Talb, a member of a radical Palestinian popular struggle front who is in a Swedish prison awaiting the verdict of a trial for bomb attacks in northern Europe against Israeli and American targets.

It said George Ennos, chief constable of Dumfries and Galloway police, has warned that Abu Talb should not be accorded more significance than he merits.

"There have been other developments in the year which would be equally interesting were they publicly known," he was quoted as saying.

In an interview with Scotland on Sunday, an Edinburgh weekly newspaper, Lord Fraser said any trial would almost certainly take place in the United States.

The law officer was quoted as saying Scotland would not compete with the United States to extradite suspects held in other countries, and would stage a trial only if a country holding a suspect refused an extradition request because the United States has the death penalty.

"If, on the other hand, the United States was in that position to secure extradition when the United Kingdom couldn't, I want these people brought to justice and I wouldn't stand in the way of anything," he was quoted as saying.

America

Bitter cold blankets US: The east settled into a deep Arctic freeze Saturday as heavy snow threatened the extreme northeast and Midwest, while cold temperatures continued to chill the southeast into Texas.

Northern New England braced for a foot of snow and southern sections prepared for several inches, said the national weather service. Early morning readings ranged from the teens to the single digits.

The northern plains dawned frigid and snowy, while in the Midwest, St. Louis recorded a morning low of 8 degrees F (-11 C). Up to 10 inches (0.25 m) of new accumulation was on tap for parts of Ohio, and 4 inches (0.1 m) for New Carlisle, Indiana. Already buried under 2 1/2 feet (0.77 m) of snow. (UPI)

Transplant patient dies: A 2-year-old boy who received a split liver in a transplant last week has died, a hospital spokeswoman said.

Mitchell Wallace died of multiple systems failure on Saturday, said children's hospital of Pittsburgh spokeswoman Margie Buczynski. Doctors plan to perform tests to determine what caused the failure, she said.

A lack of available donor organs led Pittsburgh doctors to split one liver for transplant into Mitchell and a 3-year-old child Wednesday.

The hospital did not identify or release other details about the other child at the request of parents. (AP)

Julio meets baseball star: Six-year-old Julio Berumen, one of the best-known victims of the San Francisco earthquake, delayed his release from the hospital after two months to meet a baseball star.

The boy, whose right leg was amputated during efforts to rescue him from a collapsed highway, was anxious to go home Friday morning, until he heard that Dave Stewart, pitcher for the Oakland Athletics pitcher, was visiting the hospital in the afternoon, said children's hospital spokesman Steve Tiger.

"He said, 'I'm not going,'" Tiger said. Julio held out and received photos of the 1989 world series champs with other children who met with Stewart in the hospital's fourth-floor playroom. He also got something extra — Stewart's own green satin team jacket. (AP)

Search for missing plane: A light airplane with six people aboard disappeared during a snowstorm in eastern New York, and a search Saturday was hampered by bad weather, authorities said.

The missing twin-engine piper Navaho took off Friday from Glens Falls airport, 50 miles (80 km) north of Albany, bound for Orange county airport just north of New York City, said Ann MacMillan, spokeswoman for the civil air patrol. (AP)

Armand Hammer wife dies: Frances Hammer, wife of industrialist Armand Hammer, has died of pneumonia after undergoing surgery for a broken hip, a spokesman for Occidental Petroleum Corp. said. She was 87.

Mrs Hammer died Saturday at the University of California-Los Angeles Medical Center, said Occidental spokesman Frank Ashley. Hammer, 91, was at the medical center when she died, Ashley said. (AP)

Shuttle launch delayed: The liftoff of space shuttle Columbia scheduled for Thursday will be delayed again because of lagging work at the launch pad, sources have reported.

The mission to launch and retrieve a satellite has already been postponed twice. No new date will be set until shuttle managers meet Monday, said the sources, who spoke on condition of anonymity Saturday.

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration has not officially changed the liftoff, scheduled for 6:04 pm (2304 GMT) Thursday.

The new date could be Friday or Saturday. But Nass said that if it can't launch by Saturday, it would delay the effort until at least Dec 27 to free workers for the Christmas holiday. (AP)

'Gone with the Wind' anniversary: The 50th anniversary celebration of "Gone with the Wind," America's most famous movie, duplicated the style of the film's original opening except for one striking difference — there were blacks in the audience as well as on the screen.

Fifty years ago, the southern elite arrived dressed in formal evening attire for the premiere of a movie of romance and survival among slaveholding Georgia aristocrats whose old south civilization was shattered by the US civil war, which pitted north against south.

The guests paid up to 10 dollars, a high price in that depression era, to enter a lavish movie palace, gaze upon Clarke Gable's chiseled features and watch Vivien Leigh flight to save her plantation from the Yankees. (Reuters)

US civil war memorial: The roads and hillsides winding through Antietam national battlefield were softly lit Saturday night with 23,110 candles, one for each soldier killed, wounded or missing on the bloodiest day of US civil war.

"It's a memorial and Christmas is the season of lights. We just thought it would be a good time to stop and reflect," Richard Ram-bur, the battlefield's superintendent, said. "Everybody talks about 23,000, but not very many people really have an idea of how many that is." (AP)

First homosexual priest: The first ordination in the United States of an openly homosexual man as an Episcopal priest took place on Saturday but the ceremony was not without protest.

Several dissenters, including a woman, objected to the history-making ordination at the Trinity church in Hoboken, New Jersey, saying the move was "a perversion of the Holy Scriptures."

But Bishop John Spong said J. Robert Williams should be priest in response to "God's call to build a more open, inclusive and Christ-like church." (Reuters)

Judge convicted of bribery: A suspended county judge accused of running the rural courthouse like a fiefdom was convicted of bribery and official oppression Saturday, but acquitted of open lewdness and three other counts.

Suspended Cambria county judge Joseph F. O'Kicki, who rose from poverty to win his first judicial election 18 years ago, showed no emotion as the verdicts were read after 16-1-2 hours of deliberations over two days.



Swastika power

A man dressed in khaki uniform and carrying a swastika flag leaves after a rally on Dec 16 in Boksburg, South Africa, to mark the most significant Afrikaner holiday. (Reuters wire-photo)

Europe

Mangano cremated in Madrid: Italian actress Silvana Mangano, who died of a heart attack, was cremated in Madrid today and her ashes were flown to New York.

Her family said the ashes would rest close to her son, Federico, who died in a plane crash in Alaska in 1982.

Mangano, who had lung cancer, died on Saturday after falling into a coma on Thursday. (Reuters)

Gale winds rip across Spain: Gale-force winds of up to 117 km (72.5 miles) an hour ripped across northern Spain on Saturday, tearing off roofs, knocking down power lines and damaging buildings, civil defence officials said.

A man died of a heart attack in a town near Oviedo, capital of the Asturias region, when he saw a wind-swept fire move towards his mountain home, police said. (AP)

Killed filming storms: A French television cameraman was killed while out filming weekend storms which battered the west coast of France and north west Spain.

French police said Joseph Delage of the state television channel FR3 died when his car was swept into the sea at Conquet, in Brittany on Saturday evening. He had been filming the storm.

Two other people nearby were also swept from the coast but were rescued, police said today. (Reuters)

Killer flu virus alarm: A new strain of the flu virus could emerge at any time to "devastate" populations around the world, according to a warning issued in London today.

It would make this month's epidemic, which has already struck down at least a million people in Britain, appear a "blip" in the history of the illness, according to medical experts quoted by the Sunday Correspondent newspaper.

The latest figures for flu cases, showed the rate of increase has slowed, suggesting the outbreak will have peaked by Christmas. (Kuna)

Portuguese local elections: Portuguese voted in local elections today in a mid-term test of the centre-right government's popularity expected to produce gains for the left.

Late opinion polls showed Socialists and Communists could capture key cities from the ruling Social Democratic Party (PSD) which holds nearly half the country's 305 town halls. Absenteeism was expected to be high among Portugal's eight million registered voters, who have some 200,000 candidates to choose from for 50,000 municipal, district and borough council posts. (Reuters)

Labour narrows Tory lead: Britain's main opposition Labour Party's lead over the Conservatives has narrowed by four per cent in the past month, according to a new poll published in the Observer newspaper today.

It gives Labour 46 per cent to the vote, compared with 39 per cent for the ruling Conservative Party.

The corresponding figures last month were 47 per cent and 36 per cent. The Liberal Democrats and the Social Democrats remained unchanged at three per cent and one per cent. (Kuna)

Stormy UK weather: The London weather centre warned today of further gales and stormy blizzards sweeping the country, with gusts of 75 miles per hour monitored in the British capital early this morning.

Ferry sailing across the English Channel was halted in some British ports. Storm, and heavy rain started to attack Britain since yesterday and the violent weather created treacherous road conditions throughout the UK. The forecast is for worse conditions, but the high winds are expected to ease tomorrow. (Kuna)

Italy nabs drug ring: Police said on Saturday they had seized a tonne of hashish and an unspecified amount of cocaine in Rome and Genoa and arrested 11 Italians running a European drug trafficking ring. The gang smuggled the narcotics from Morocco and Colombia to Italy and the Netherlands, the police said. Ten men were arrested in Genoa and Rome and one in the Spanish resort of Marbella, they said. (Reuters)

FBI investigators abandon hopes of prosecuting Bloch for spying

WASHINGTON, Dec 17, (AP): Felix Bloch, the American diplomat suspected of spying for the Soviets, said yesterday it appears he no longer has FBI agents trailing his every move.

"It was strange," said Bloch, a 30-year State Department veteran who came under FBI surveillance last spring, but has never been charged with any wrongdoing. "It was as if they left from one minute to the next."

FBI spokesman Charles Steinmetz acknowledged there may have been some "visual changes" but the investigation was continuing.

"We may have cut back, but we're still investigating," he said. "I have no comments beyond that. But it is an active investigation."

Meanwhile, the Los Angeles Times cited sources as saying the FBI has failed to find solid evidence to support espionage charges against Bloch and has all but abandoned hopes of prosecuting him. Steinmetz declined to comment.

Bloch, who spoke to a reporter in a Washington grocery store near his home, said: "I like my freedom." He said the obvious FBI tail appeared to have faded away about a week and a half ago.

Last July and August, a host of journalists and camera crews joined the government agents in following Bloch every-

where, including long treks in the capital and up to New York to visit his relatives.

Bloch, 54, declined to comment further, saying his attorney told him not to speak.

Intelligence experts have said that even if round-the-clock surveillance were dropped, a less obtrusive surveillance might take its place. In that instance, agents might regularly drive by or check back to see that a target was keeping to his usual schedule.

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Eligible refugees also join protests

HONG KONG, Dec 17, (AP): About 500 Vietnamese refugees eligible for resettlement overseas protested today for the first time against forced repatriation and burned a poster of British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher outside their camp.

The 500 demonstrators, of all ages, marched and shouted slogans in the neighbourhood out of the Pillar Point refugee camp for two hours.

Chanting in Vietnamese, "rather die here than go back to Vietnam," they voiced support for the 44,000 boat people in detention centres who face repatriation back to their communist homeland against their will.

They also carried placards that read "Thatcher is a killer" and "forced repatriation is inhuman." Some of them burned an effigy of Thatcher wearing a police uniform and wielding a club.

There are some 56,000 Vietnamese currently in Hong Kong. Some 12,000 who arrived here before June 1988 are automatically eligible for resettlement. Those who arrived after the cutoff date face repatriation to Vietnam unless they can prove they fled because of fears of persecution.

"But all of us have relatives in detention centres. We don't know what would happen to them," said 17-year-old Lee Bach Fa, one of the protesters. Lee, who will be leaving for Canada soon, said many people cried during the peaceful two-hour demonstration.

"We know it (the protest) may not help," she said. "But all of us came from Vietnam and know how bad it was. We don't want to go back."

Another said: "We thanked the Hong Kong government for putting us up for the past years. But sending Vietnamese back is very disappointing."

Protests have erupted daily in Vietnamese detention centres in Hong Kong after 51 Vietnamese were whisked to the airport before dawn on Tuesday and flown to Vietnam against their will.

But today's protest was the first by Vietnamese refugees who do not have to return to their communist homeland.

Tran Phu Nhan, a refugee representative at Pillar Point said they decided to protest today because most people do not have to work today.

In London, Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach was quoted today as saying Vietnam will ask Britain to take back any of the 51 boat people who say they were expelled from Hong Kong last week against their will.

Pope John Paul today criticised Hong Kong's forced repatriation of Vietnamese boat people, calling the decision of the British colony's government grave.

Hanoi rejects forced repatriation

UK gets note saying Vietnam reserves the right to send back boat people

LONDON, Dec 17, (Agencies): Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach was quoted today as saying Vietnam will ask Britain to take back any of the 51 boat people who say they were expelled from Hong Kong last week against their will.

Britain removed 51 Vietnamese from detention camps in Hong Kong on Tuesday and returned them to Vietnam on a chartered airplane.

It plans to expel another 44,000 of the 57,000 Vietnamese in the British colony on the grounds they are illegal immigrants seeking better living standards, not genuine refugees fleeing political persecution in their homeland.

"The British say this is not forced repatriation, so we believe their words," Thach was quoted as telling the Sunday correspondent.

"Now we are checking with these 51 people. If there are any who are against repatriation, we will ask the British to take them to Hong Kong. If they refuse to take them to Hong Kong, we will stop our co-operation for receiving the voluntary returnees."

Britain has, in fact, said it is returning boat people against their will. Only a few hundred have agreed to go home voluntarily.

The official Vietnam news agency, monitored in Bangkok yesterday, said a Foreign Ministry official delivered a note to British Ambassador Emrys Davies on Friday saying Vietnam reserves the right to send them back to Hong Kong.

A British Foreign Office spokesman said the Vietnamese message did not represent a change in

that country's position and that there would be no change in British policy.

Britain and Vietnam have signed an agreement permitting the return of the boat people.

Thach was quoted as saying the 51 boat people returned last week to their homes in the northern provinces of Haiphong and Quang Ninh "had not been previously informed" of what would happen to them.

Britain has been criticised, particularly by the United States, for the forcible repatriations. It has halted the removals until a House of Commons debate on Tuesday, but government ministers have refused to rule out a resumption.

The forced repatriations have been popular in

Hong Kong and elsewhere in southeast Asia.

Britain is expected to give aid to Vietnam after a breakthrough with Hanoi on returning boat people, diplomats said.

Hanoi and London negotiated for months over the programme, called mandatory return by officials. Hong Kong is reluctant host to some 57,000 Vietnamese boat people, of whom only 14,000 are considered genuine refugees to be resettled.

Diplomats in Hong Kong and officials in London said the way was now clear for Britain to start giving aid to Vietnam, effectively blocked from such Western help since its soldiers entered Cambodia in 1978. Hanoi's troops withdrew in September.

No second thoughts Bush defends trips to China

MARIGOT, St Martin, Dec 17, (UPI): President Bush declared he had "no second thoughts" about sending a secret delegation to China last week and claimed he already has seen some still-secret "indications" of a response.

Bush defended his decision to send his national security adviser, Brent Scowcroft, and Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger as the first high-level delegation to visit China since June, telling a news

conference:

"I have no second thoughts at all. And being somewhat familiar with China, I've learned you listen to everything that is said in a toast. You look at every word and you analyse it."

Bush's move, kept secret until the delegation arrived in Beijing, prompted a flurry of condemnation — especially about the effusive toasts exchanged between the two sides — from members of Congress who say he is turning a blind eye to Chinese actions on student demonstrators, who are calling for democratic reform.

Bush, who served as the US representative in China and visited there last February, cut diplomatic contacts and imposed sanctions against Beijing after the Chinese crackdown on student-led pro-democracy demonstrators in Beijing's Tiananmen Square in June.

"I'm strongly supportive of this mission," he said. "And I said that I initiated it and I'm not going to go further except to say that I hope that it will have positive results."

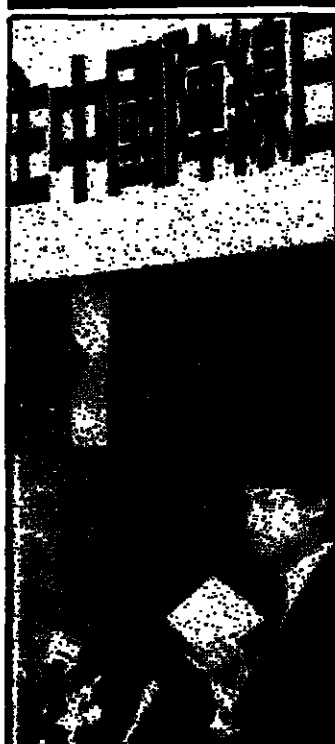
The question arose at a lengthy joint news conference with French President Francois Mitterrand, who was first asked if the subject had come up during their four hours of talks on the Caribbean Island.

Mitterrand, before passing the question back to Bush, said the American President "himself expressed the wish of being able to give us his views on this subject and the reason for what was done."

Bush, though not giving any specifics, said, "we've already seen an indication, a couple of indications of... (a response from China), and I think, knowing China again, that time is required and this is a billion-plus people and I do not want to hurt a billion-plus people further."

"I think we've made the right step, and only time will tell how the leadership in China views the mission," he said.

(See also Page 7)



Activists meet

Chinese student dissident Wuer Kaibai claps hands after speaking at an inaugural meeting for the establishment of the Japan branch of the dissident organization Federation for Democracy in China. About 250 Chinese including students and dissident activists from abroad attended the meeting at a downtown Tokyo hotel. (Reuter wire-photo)



End of journey

Two men carrying a small child smile (photo left) and a group of passengers (right), from the hijacked CAAC 747 airliner, return safely to Beijing. The plane, on a flight from Beijing to Shanghai was hijacked to



Japan by a man who claimed he was disillusioned with China following the crushing of the pro-democracy movement. The hijacker was captured and the plane returned to China. (Reuter wirephoto)

Hijacked jetliner returns to China

BEIJING, Dec 17, (AP): A Chinese airliner hijacked to Japan by a knife-wielding man flew back to Beijing today, with the hijacker's wife and 10-year-old son on board. Police and airline officials said they did not know the status of the wife and child, but foreign reporters saw her led from the plane in handcuffs.

Chinese President Yang Shangkun, at a brief news conference before setting out on an 11-day trip to the Middle East, thanked Japanese authorities for their co-operation in ending the hijacking.

The Air China 747 was heading from Beijing to New York yesterday when Zhang Zhenhai, who had a knife and claimed to have a bomb, ordered the pilot to fly to South Korea. South Korea refused permission to land, and the pilot diverted to Fukuoka, 900 kilometres (560 miles) southwest of Tokyo.

The Japan Broadcasting Corp. (NHK) said Zhang told Fukuoka police that he took part in the spring democracy movement in Beijing, and was sick of living in China after the movement.

Japanese police said Zhang's wife, whose name has not been released, said she wanted to return to China. They quoted Zhang as saying she and the child did not know about his hijacking plans.

Zhang remained in a Japanese hospital. He was injured when a crew member pushed him from the plane after it landed in Fukuoka.

Japan's deputy chief cabinet secretary, Nobuo Ishihara, said the government would "take procedures" to return him in keeping with international agreements.

Japan cannot automatically deport hijackers if they ask for political asylum.

An official at the Civil Aviation Administration of China, in charge of all airlines, said 185 of the original 200 passengers flew back with the plane and would restart their journey to San Francisco and New York. He said the others planned to continue their trip from Japan.

CAAC said most of the passengers were Chinese. Japanese police said there were 19 non-Chinese, including 12 Americans.

Meanwhile, Zhang's doctor in Fukuoka, Yutaka Kimura, said this morning on Japanese television that the hijacker had "improved considerably, although he keeps saying his back is hurting."

But he was still not well enough to be released, Kimura said.

Demonstrations continue

Muslims rally in Sofia

SOBIA, Dec 17, (Reuter): Ethnic Turks and other Muslims have joined pro-democracy demonstrations in Bulgaria which have continued despite concessions from the country's communist leadership.

More than 6,000 Turks and Pomaks, other Bulgarian Muslims, staged a mass rally in Gode Delcev, about 250 km (160 miles) southeast of Sofia, demanding the right to use Islamic names and practise their faith.

The protest, along with fresh pro-democracy demonstrations in Sofia last night, came only one day after Bulgaria's communist leaders made a major concession under mass popular pressure.

The Muslims gathered in a sports stadium and read out a 16-point declaration calling for democracy in Bulgaria, the right to wear traditional Turkish garb, speak Turkish and practice religious rites such as circumcision.

Under the rule of the now disgraced Todor Zhivkov, the country's 1.5 million-strong ethnic Turkish minority were the object of an assimilation drive in 1984 and 1985 in which they were forced to adopt Bulgarian names and drop Turkish practices.

The officially sponsored campaign led to riots across the country in which at least 50 people were killed.

Bulgaria's communist authorities adopted similar tactics towards the Pomaks in the 1970s forcing them to change Islamic names to Bulgarian ones.

Yesterday's demonstrations followed a major concession on Friday, when parliament passed a declaration promising that at its next session in January it would scrap the Communist Party's constitutional right to rule.

Earlier, a hostile crowd of

Zhivkov kin raped girl

SOBIA, Dec 17, (Reuter): The grandson of ousted Bulgarian leader Todor Zhivkov raped a teenage girl but evidence in the case was removed by authorities, the official Communist Party newspaper Rabotnichesko Delo said today.

An article by Sofia metropolitan police inspector Yanko Dimov said Todor Slavkov and two other youths raped an 18-year-old girl on July 9, 1988.

At the time of his ouster, there were calls for him to be tried for corruption and Communist Party officials have attacked him for widespread nepotism and political and economic blunders.

Rabotnichesko Delo said on Thursday that Zhivkov may have been indirectly responsible for an air crash in Sofia in 1988.

Zhivkov was steadily demoted after his ouster and was forced out of parliament last Friday, thus losing his immunity from criminal prosecution. Zhivkov's son Vladimir, who has been branded a playboy, was also stripped of his party membership.

some 40,000 people had jeered and booed new leader Petar Mladenov, who ousted Zhivkov.

Yesterday, about 2,000 pro-democracy demonstrators rallied outside Bulgaria's main broadcasting building in Sofia to press calls for non-communist groups to be allowed to present their views on state-run television.

Demonstrators chanted "democracy, democracy and we are not extremists" as they marched through central Sofia to the building in an angry reaction to charges by state-run broadcasting services that some opposition groups were covers for extremist activities.

"Even if we are extremists, we are extremists for democracy," said opposition activist Racho Gemedjiev, who led the march through dimly lit streets in fog and drizzling rain.

The protesters won some concessions including a promise from television officials to involve prominent opposition figures in broadcast round-table discussions on the country's problems.

"We are against extremist reactions," said Zhelev Zhelev, president of the biggest opposition group, the Union of Democratic Powers, which unites nine opposition movements.



A young demonstrator holds up a 'democracy' banner during a demonstration in front of the National Assembly building in Sofia. (Reuter wirephoto)

Sihanouk wants Hanoi-backed Cambodia govt to be dissolved

BANGKOK, Dec 17, (UPI): Cambodian resistance leader Prince Norodom Sihanouk said his resistance coalition would vacate Cambodia's UN seat as part of a peace plan only if the Vietnamese-installed government in Phnom Penh were first dissolved, according to a statement issued today.

"The vacancy of the Cambodian seat at the UN is neither acceptable, nor equitable, nor logical if this vacancy is not preceded by a simultaneous dismantling of the (resistance coalition) and the (Vietnamese-backed) state of Cambodia," he said in the statement made available to United Press International in Bangkok.

Both Sihanouk and Prime Minister Hun Sen, who was installed by a Vietnamese invasion in 1979, have expressed interest in a plan proposed by Australia to put Cambodia under temporary UN trusteeship during preparations for general elections. The UN trusteeship plan has also been put forward by the chairman of the US House of Representatives Asian affairs subcommittee, Stephen

Solarz.

Hun Sen said last week the plan, modeled after the UN peace-keeping operation in Namibia, would be acceptable only if the Cambodian seat at the UN were made vacant.

That seat is currently held by Sihanouk's shaky coalition which includes Sihanouk's followers, the non-communist Khmer People's National Liberation Front and the Khmer Rouge which is blamed for the deaths of more than 1 million people during their 1975-1979 rule.

US to halve Europe troops

WASHINGTON, Dec 17, (Reuter): Senior US defence officials have recommended cutting US troop levels in Europe by half if Soviet reductions continue, the Washington Post reported today.

They also say the United States should for the first time consider reducing its naval commitment to defend the North Atlantic Sea lanes, the Post said.

It said the proposals were among a series to be presented to Defence Secretary Richard Cheney in nine meetings over the next few weeks. Military chiefs and selected civilians will also attend.

The Post quoted sources as saying that defence planners had also concluded the Soviet Union could no longer count on its Eastern European allies to act in concert with Soviet forces in any hostilities.

Cutting the current force of 305,000 US ground and air force personnel in Europe to 150,000 would represent a "political minimum" for the United States, officials familiar with the proposals told the Post.

Achieve

The Navy's top admiral says the Soviet Union may be able to achieve much of what it wants in naval arms control "by just sitting back and waiting" for budget pressures to pare away the US fleet.

"It is not in the interest of this country to have a weak navy, or even a weaker navy," Adm. Carlisle A. H. Trost, the chief of naval operations, said in an interview last week at the Defence Department.

The admiral, reviewing the results of the recent Malta Summit, rejected any move to enter naval arms control talks with the Soviets, a stance taken by President George Bush in his talks with Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev.

In the interview, Trost also took a tough line on impending budget cuts, contending it would be "unwise to respect the budget" to take on additional duties such as the war against drugs — with fewer ships and personnel.

"If we are to have the capability to respond... as we are called on repeatedly, we need the force we have now as the absolute minimum," he said.

If not, the admiral warned, "you're meeting the same commitments with fewer forces... Your ability to respond goes down, the burden on your personnel goes up."

Defence Secretary Dick Cheney has been ordered to keep defence spending to \$292 billion for the next fiscal year, a level 2 per cent below the anticipated inflation rate.

And in order to keep expenses in line with anticipated tight budget in the coming years of 1992 to 1994, the secretary has also ordered the armed services to come up with plans to cut some \$150 billion in projected spending over the coming years.

New look

Faster than anyone had thought possible in Nato, the Western allies are asking the East bloc to agree to aerial inspections of each other's military sites.

Nato's 16 foreign ministers, concluding a two-day meeting Friday, invited the seven Warsaw Pact members to sign an "open skies" accord under which unarmed planes can fly over and photograph military installations across North America, the North Atlantic, West and East Europe and all of Soviet Asia.

The Warsaw Pact nations have agreed to discuss the issue, starting early next year.

The United States first suggested the idea in 1955 but saw it shot down in cold war rhetoric. But US President George Bush, seeing a different East-West climate 34 years later, revived it in May, and on Friday the Nato allies put a formal proposal to the Warsaw Pact nations.

The Nato foreign ministers meeting in Brussels also agreed to consider US proposals that the alliance's role be expanded as the threat of military confrontation with the Soviet Union recedes.

Day to seal romantic ties Xmas Japanese style

TOKYO, Dec 17, (AP): Christmas was introduced to Japan four centuries ago, but the holiday celebrated today has little to do with Christian roots.

While people in other countries exchange gifts, the Japanese on Christmas Eve hoopoe to seal a relationship with a member of the opposite sex.

Older couples pack the hotels, paying about 45,000 yen (\$315) per person for dinner shows and a night together, and cruise ships are booked months ahead for \$2,000-yen (\$140) overnight cruises in Tokyo Bay.

Thousands of people are attending more than 130 productions of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, a season requisite in Japan like Handel's Messiah in other nations.

In one concert in Osaka, about 5,000 people watched as more than 9,000 others, including three orchestras and multiple choral groups, performed the symphony.

In this nation where only one per cent of the population is Christian, the Japanese have taken Christmas and made it into something uniquely their own, as they have with countless other imported products and customs.

On Valentine's Day, for instance, Japanese women do the giving, declaring their love by presenting men with chocolates. For Christmas, it's the men who are instructed by magazines and television programmes on how to win a date and plan a Christmas Eve that will win her heart.

"It's a test for a man, whether he can provide the right luxuries for one day," said the weekly magazine Spa.

Christmas was first celebrated in Japan in the mid-16th century, when Christianity was introduced to Japan. But, the traditions of sending Christmas cards, exchanging gifts and putting up Christmas decorations did not take hold until this century.

In the early 1930s, department stores began holding Christmas sales which conveniently coincided with year-end bonuses and traditional gift-giving.

But for decades, Christmas meant an obligatory cake brought home Christmas Eve by father — frequently after a long evening out drinking.

Cake sales remain twice as high in December as in any other month, but are falling as Christmas customs change, according to the Japan Western Confectionery Association.

"In the past, Christmas for most people meant Christmas cakes, but now people are beginning to celebrate Christmas in other ways — with parties and presents and family activities," the association's Kazuo Nagao said.

But the customs has left a bitter-sweet legacy — the term "unsoled Christmas cake" often is used to describe unmarried women over age 25.

Christmas decorations hit store windows right after Halloween — another import.

Nine years ago, Matsuya turned the heads of Christmas shoppers with a six-storey-high poster in its Ginza store of a woman clad only in a strategically wrapped red ribbon.

This year, in the same atrium, it features an elegant recreation of the Kathe Wohlfahrt Christmas market in Rothenburg, West Germany, with dozens of handmade crafts.

"People now are interested in the personal touch, creating a warm family experience together," said Masaki Oka, the store's sales planning manager.

Annual sales of Christmas presents total about 150 billion yen (\$1 billion), including 75 billion yen (\$525 million) in toys, 34 billion yen (\$168 million) in clothes and 10 billion yen (\$70 million) in cards and other stationery, Spa magazine says.

Each December, department stores ring up 25 per cent of their total annual sales, according to the Japan Department Store Association. That's also due to Japan's long-entrenched custom of year-end presents, called "Oseibo."

While some stores have attempted to combine Oseibo and Christmas presents by calling them "year-end gifts," others have tried to differentiate the two — doubtless aware of the extra merchandising possibilities.

"Christmas presents are completely different from Oseibo," Oka said. "Oseibo gifts are given out of business obligation, and people think only about how much they need to spend on each person when they shop. But Christmas gifts are a chance to pick out a present that you think will make someone happy."

Many of those gifts will be presented before Christmas as a way of enticing a woman to accept a date on Christmas Eve. If Japanese men accept the advice of a 80-page article on Christmas Eve dating in the biweekly men's magazine Hot Dog.

Spending Christmas Eve together is seen as a public declaration of a relationship, and for those not ready to make a commitment or afraid of being left at home alone, some groups of friends make plans together for Dec. 24 far in advance and then make sure their other friends know.

Hot Dog magazine recommends a visit to a romantic chapel as part of a Christmas Eve date.

"A good idea is to pray together quietly with your girlfriend," it says. "Do it somewhere fashionable. Your relationship will quickly become more intimate."

Handwritten signature or mark.

E. German reds adopt interim party platform

Feared security service disbanded

EAST BERLIN, Dec 17, (Agencies): East Germany's struggling communists, facing competitive elections next year, adopted an interim party platform today calling for "human, democratic socialism."

The programme was adopted unanimously by some 2,700 delegates as they wrapped up a weekend-long emergency party congress, during which delegates also added the tag "party of democratic socialism" to their name.

"It was the first Democratic Party congress we have staged in decades," party chief Gregor Gysi told delegates today.

Gysi, 41, is a lawyer who defended the rights of the opposition before becoming party chief earlier this month, succeeding discredited Egon Krenz.

The new communist platform says the party roots lie in the "communist and social democratic workers' movement," a phrase aimed at disassociating the party from 40 years of Stalinist rule.

The platform which also reiterates the party's opposition to German reunification, is to serve as a guideline for the party until its next regular congress in February.

The communists have been under increasing pressure from mass protests demanding democratic reforms and in the past two months have ousted hardline leaders, opened borders and promised free elections.

Parliamentary elections now are set for May 6, 1990. The party has given up its constitutional mandate to rule, and more than 700,000 members have quit in recent weeks, dropping membership to about 1.6 million.

Meanwhile, the government of Premier Hans Modrow today announced that East Germany's new "domestic intelligence services" will be under strict control of the government.

The new agency will replace the hated party-controlled Ministry for National Security, which was dissolved in the course of the wave of democratic reforms in East Germany over the past two months.

Gysi, in his speech today, reiterated the communists' opposition to German reunification, saying East Germany must remain "a humanistic, socially oriented alternative" to its capitalist neighbour, the official news agency ADN reported.

The existence of two separate German states is "the guarantee for ensuring peace and stability in Europe," ADN quoted him as saying. Those wanting German reunification were playing with fire, he said.

Gysi, whose speech was adopted as a guideline party policy document, said unspecified groups were demanding reunification with West Germany. Calls for union or some form of merger have been growing louder in both German states in recent weeks.

West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl visits East Germany this week and seems likely to draw large pro-union crowds.

"Those demanding a special German route to unification outside the framework of European unity are playing, consciously or unconsciously, with fire," Gysi said to applause.

"Greater Germany would be a victory for the right and drive the left to the fringes of society," Gysi said those wanting unification would be difficult to satisfy.

They would then want to regain German territories relinquished after World War Two and now part of Poland and the Soviet Union.

"If the border between two German states falls before Europe is unified then a discussion will break out about border changes," he said. "Peace would be seriously endangered and once again it would have been the Germans who caused a new European conflict."

Gysi also called for discussions with church leaders on a law protecting religion in East Germany. He said the communists favour "protecting" Jewish religion and culture and urged the resumption of diplomatic relations with Israel.

Gysi said his party firmly backed the coalition government of Hans Modrow, one of his deputies as party leader.

"We depend on this government to a large extent to steer our ship of state part the reefs of anarchy and absorption by West Germany and onto a clear route into deep waters," he said.

On Saturday, delegates at the congress burst into thunderous applause when Michael Schumann, addressing a party report on corruption, accused ousted hardline leader Erich Honecker of ignoring public desire for reform.

The ailing Honecker, in a letter sent to the party leadership nearly a month ago and released to the delegates yesterday, conceded he had "doomed" himself about the state of the economy and the mood of the people.

He called for more moves toward democratic reforms in East German politics, economy and military. Gysi also urged adoption of a new national constitution and creation of a supreme court to defend it.

In addition, the party chief proposed a reduction in the length of army service and "an immediate freeing of military capacities for the economy."

Earlier East Germany announced it was disbanding its feared security police to replace it with a trimmed-down intelligence corps and anti-subversion team.



Modrow (left) chats with Gysi at the Communist Party congress in East Berlin. (Reuters wirephoto)

Students keep up pressure

'Havel to the castle'

PRAGUE, Dec 17, (Agencies): Tens of thousands of Czechoslovak students shouting "Long live Havel" marched through central Prague today to keep up the pressure for democratic reforms.

The rally was called to honour fellow students injured in a march a month ago.

Police brutality against the students on that occasion sparked outrage and mass political upheaval which has since ended the Communist Party's unchallenged grip on power.

As on Nov 17, tens of thousands of students gathered in a square which is surrounded by buildings of Prague University.

They chanted or carried banners proclaiming "Havel to the castle," supporting playwright Vaclav Havel as their choice to be the next occupant of Prague Castle, the seat of Czechoslovakia's president.

A month ago, Havel was little more than a symbol of opposition to communist rule. Now he is a popular hero.

"A month ago, from this place, we began the destruction of the regime — without knowing it," students' leader Martin Klizna said to laughter and applause before the march set off.

With a rallying cry of "Long live Havel," the marchers set off slowly and calmly.

No police were in evidence and many passers-by joined the students as the march moved towards the city centre.

The march was to take the same route as the one on Nov 17, which came to a violent end when police trapped and attacked some 2,000 students in a central Prague street.

Deputies in the communist-dominated Parliament would be "besieged," one student leader said today.

The opposition has called for the replacement of deputies who no longer have the confidence of their electorate — meaning hardline communists.

Party leader Karel Urbanek today told a special Slovak Party congress in Bratislava that "discredited people" must be weeded out.

Opposition leader Havel has signalled a possible agreement with Alexander Dubcek to avoid a fight over the presidency, saying he would only serve in the



Havel post if Dubcek gets a top government role.

In a televised speech, the once-banned playwright declared yesterday that he would accept the presidency only temporarily, until someone can be elected for the five-year term by "a freely elected new federal assembly."

He said he would only serve if "next to me, whatever his official function may be, will be Alexander Dubcek... I will not allow any dark forces to put a wedge between me and him and therefore between the Czechs and Slovaks."

Dubcek, leader of the 1968 "Prague Spring" reforms, had been considered Havel's main rival for the largely ceremonial post.

Rumours circulating widely in Prague suggested that Dubcek, expelled from the Communist Party in 1969 after the Soviet-led invasion that crushed his reforms, had agreed to accept the chairmanship of Parliament in exchange for supporting Havel.

Czechoslovakia's Foreign Minister Jiri Dienstbier cut through a barbed wire fence in the Iron Curtain with Austria today, and announced visa-free travel for Austrians starting Dec 20.

But he also said visitors still must exchange a minimum of 200 Austrian schillings (about \$16) a day.

The visa and exchange control requirements are being discussed by the two countries, which both have said they aim to abolish the visa requirement entirely.

Yugoslav govt to unveil reform

BELGRADE, Dec 17, (AP): Yugoslav Premier Ante Markovic is warning his government will resign if lawmakers reject a package of anti-inflation measures he plans to submit tomorrow to curb the country's worst economic crisis.

The three-day parliamentary session already has been billed by the media as the "D-Day" of Yugoslavia's future development, with a sharp clash expected between liberals and conservatives from the country's different ethnic regions.

Markovic's government, which took over last March, has moved fast to introduce market mechanisms as a way out of Yugoslavia's economic crisis, marked by a 2,000-per cent inflation rate, a \$17-billion foreign debt and a 17 per cent unemployment rate.

The reform programme has come under strong criticism from conservatives in Yugoslavia's Communist Party leadership, especially in the republic of Serbia, who oppose his market-oriented efforts and the promotion of greater political pluralism.

Several key government-sponsored reforms have been blocked by the conservatives, and Markovic is expected to demand urgent changes in Yugoslavia's constitution that would give more power to the federal government to implement its programme.

The new monetary package has been long under strict secrecy, and speculation about the measures has caused a huge shopping spree by Yugoslavs fearing their effect.

"Never before... have there been so many expectations and so much guesswork" about a session of parliament, the state-run Tanjug news agency today.

The tough reform measures are expected to include a substantial devaluation of the national currency, the dinar, and tight monetary and budgetary controls accompanied by stiff wage and price discipline.

But government spokesmen have denied rumours of a wage and price freeze.

The government has said the country would receive "substantial financial aid" if the package is passed, including a half-billion of up to \$1 billion from the International Monetary Fund and some Western countries.

Serbia, the largest of the country's six member republics, claims Markovic's reforms have done nothing to curb rampant inflation.

Fearing discontent over the monetary programme, and reforms, Serbian authorities have proposed short-term measures designed to bring down inflation.

In an attempt to pressure the government, the state-run trade unions of Serbia and its ally Montenegro have announced short general warning strikes for next week to coincide with the parliamentary session.

century doctrines," he said, referring to marxism. Noting the drops in production and hyperinflation that has taken over the Polish economy this year, with prices rising recently by 50 per cent a month, he conceded that the east bloc's first non-communist government was beginning its reform in "extremely unfavourable conditions."

In the most critical test of its leadership to date, the government introduced a dozen bills to radically transform the economy and was asking the Sejm, the lower house of parliament, to approve them in time for the programme to be implemented beginning Jan 1.

The proposal requires sacrifices on the part of Poles, setting the stage for a sharp initial rise in prices as govern-

US, France in agreement

Bush, Mitterrand discuss changes in East Europe

MARIGOT, St Martin, Dec 17, (AP): US President George Bush discussed the changes in Eastern Europe with French President Francois Mitterrand yesterday, and said the United States would be "very responsive" to any request for emergency winter-time food aid from East Germany.

Bush said that except for "some nuances," he and the French leader are in general agreement on the "big questions" of how to react to the political upheaval sweeping Eastern Europe.

Both leaders told a joint-press conference they were in general agreement on a strategy to deal with changes across what used to be called the iron curtain.

At the news conference ending their daylong Caribbean retreat, Mitterrand expressed satisfaction with US-French relations. He said Secretary of US State James Baker "showed great understanding of the needs of Europe" when he pointed the way to a new role for Nato in a speech last week.

Baker suggested Nato oversee reductions of troops and armaments and take new steps to build alliances with the East.

At the same time, the French leader noted broadly at differences over the issue of German reunification with West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl.

Bush's voice was raspy from a cold and laryngitis as he and the French President fielded questions after holding private talks on this sun-splashed island in the West Indies.

Bush and Mitterrand both said they had discussed the change in Eastern Europe, where several headline communist leaders have been swept away in recent months.

Bush was asked if he would be willing to consider emergency food aid for Eastern Germany, whose citizens are among millions in Eastern Europe striving for greater freedoms after four decades of communist rule.

"Obviously, if there's emergency food aid required there. We have no request for that. But if it's required we would be very responsive, and would like to think others in the alliance would be," Bush said.

Earlier, a senior US official said France's reaction to the Baker speech was cooler than most of Washington's European allies and the French seemed suspicious of giving the United States a greater voice in the EEC.

Baker joined Bush for the talks at the end of his European trip, which included a stop in East Germany for a meeting with the reformist government leaders as well as opposition figures.

As for Eastern Europe, Bush said: "We spent a lot of time talking about Eastern Europe and the dynamic changes taking place there and inside the Soviet Union. And I would simply not go into detail on this answer except to say I feel very close to President Mitterrand's views here."

"...there may be some nuances of difference, but in terms of the big questions of Eastern Europe, I feel reassured that President Mitterrand and I are viewing these the same way," he added.

One of the "nuances"



Mitterrand (right) gives an animated answer as Bush listens on a translation handset during a joint press conference. (Reuters wirephoto)

Focus on Germans

US-UK relations in flux

WASHINGTON, Dec 17, (Reuters): The United States has tried hard to reassure Britain that it is not being eclipsed by West Germany as the main partner of US European policy, but analysts say the "special relationship" could be cooling.

The dizzying political upheaval in Eastern Europe, and the debate over German reunification, has necessarily placed the American strategic focus squarely on the Germans, West and East, US officials and other experts say.

West Germany, home to 300,000 US troops as Nato's frontline against the Warsaw pact, has long been a European financial centre. Now, Washington views it as crucial to managing political change.

"I don't have the impression that Britain and the United States are not dealing with each other as partners," said Helmut Sonnenfeldt, a former state department official who now is with the Brookings Institution, a liberal think tank.

"It's just that the focus has to be on Germany because they are so directly involved (in the European reordering) and it's a tricky political situation... Germany is a concern to everyone."

Some experts say the realignment under way in Europe may lessen the emphasis on the US-British bilateral relationship.

"US foreign policy is changing, as is British foreign policy," one US official said.

"British foreign policy will be increasingly tied, whether Mrs Thatcher likes it or not, to the European Economic Community. The question is whether we and the British want to continue to place as much emphasis on bilateral relations as we do now," he said.

appeared to touch on the thorny issue of German reunification. Asked if the two men had an agreement to slow West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl's vision of closer ties between East and West Germany, Bush said, "No."

Said Mitterrand, "Mr Kohl is a patriot and he obviously has reflexes which are not mine."

White House spokesman Martin Fitzwater said both Bush and Mitterrand had decided to meet to discuss "some of the more personal and private sides of the changes going on in Eastern Europe."

European leaders, at their meeting at Strasbourg last weekend, endorsed the concept of a single Germany, but suggested a series of conditions to ensure stability in Europe.

The Strasbourg session, hosted by Mitterrand, also produced statements praising Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's initiatives and hailing recent changes in Eastern Europe.

Mitterrand has been among European leaders urging that Soviet concerns be taken into account when discussing the issue of German unification.

Bush, too, has urged a cautious approach, arguing against setting a timetable and saying the eventual decision must be acceptable to both East and West Germans.

Despite their close relationship, France and the United States still have some areas of disagreement.

France, which has not been a member of Nato's military com-

mand since 1966, has resisted the alliance's evolution into the principal Western forum for dealing with changes in Eastern Europe.

Regarding the sale of goods to Warsaw Pact nations that might have military application, the United States has taken a more cautious approach than Mitterrand or other European leaders have advocated.

The restrictions on such trade are policed by a Paris-based organisation called Cocom — the co-ordinating committee for multilateral export controls — made up of Nato nations and Japan.

Mitterrand also has endorsed Gorbachev's call for a 35-nation conference next year to discuss changes in Eastern Europe. Bush has not.

Now there is a new source of friction: London's decision to repatriate Vietnamese refugees forcibly from Hong Kong.

(See also Page 6)

Muscovites pay last respects

Thousands honour Sakharov

MOSCOW, Dec 17, (Reuters): Braving bitter cold, tens of thousands of people from all over the Soviet Union flocked to a Moscow youth palace today to pay their last respects to long-reviled human rights campaigner Andrei Sakharov.

"He was the conscience of our nation," were the words on the lips of workers and students, housewives and parliamentary deputies, many weeping as they filed past the flower-strewn bier where the Nobel peace laureate's body lay in state.

Heading the first honour guard for the one-time top atomic physicist in the columned Hall of the Palace, just three km (two miles) from the Kremlin, was Yevgeny Primakov, a junior member of the Communist Party's ruling politburo.

Sakharov, who is three years after his release from internal exile had emerged as a key political figure urging fast reform of the Soviet system, died last Thursday, aged 68, while preparing a parliamentary speech on the country's ailing economy.

But many of the mourners were there to signal recognition of the role he had played as spiritual leader of the persecuted dissident movement in the 1970s.

Sakharov's body, his face exposed in the Russian tradition, lay on a high bier. Alongside sat his widow and fellow human rights activist Yelena Bonner, whom he met during a dissent demonstration in the late 1960s.

As the line of people waiting to pay tributes began to form early in the morning, police and troops set up security cordons on and around the broad Komsomolsky Prospekt on which the glass-fronted youth palace stands.

Dozens of police and army trucks and buses stood by as the line quickly extended down the broad avenue — an



A Muscovite places a photo of Sakharov on a makeshift shrine in front of Sakharov's house in Moscow. (Reuters wirephoto)

apparent reflection of city authorities' concern that the occasion could turn into an unscheduled demonstration.

But there was no sign of any such development as the mourners, from all walks of life and many holding flowers and wreaths, trudged through snow towards the palace, which bore no outward sign that Sakharov's body was lying inside.

A \$1 billion stabilisation loan from Western countries. Balcerowicz said the government wants to work simultaneously at stabilising the economy's current tailspin and opening it to competition and market forces.

Poland's top prosecutor and a high-level team of Soviet officials were in Moscow yesterday to investigate the slaying of a Polish scientist that a Warsaw newspaper said was an anti-Polish revenge killing.

The official Soviet News Agency Tass said, however, that the Dec 11 slaying of Jerzy Polysa in the city of Dubna near Moscow apparently occurred during a robbery.

Solidarity leader Lech Walesa urged Poles yesterday not to revolt against economic austerity measures.

Arsonist held in W. Berlin

WEST BERLIN, Dec 17, (Reuters): Police said today they were holding a man on suspicion of starting a West Berlin hotel fire that killed at least four people and injured 31 at the weekend.

The middle-aged man, detained last night, told police he had set fire to a tablecloth in a television lounge of the hotel while drunk and had left when he could not put out the flames, they added.

Five people were still missing after the fire, West Berlin's worst since World War Two. Police said 200 firemen took seven hours to bring the blaze under control.

The dead were a 40-year-old Yugoslav, his 35-year-old wife and five-year-old daughter and a man aged about 50 who had not been immediately identified.

Would-be burglar frozen to death

CHICAGO, Dec 17, (UPI): A would-be burglar died from exposure to the biting cold as he attempted to break into a Chinese restaurant on the city's south side through a ceiling vent, police said today.

The owner of the Canton Inn told police he found the burglar while opening up his restaurant yesterday morning.

Teacher assault investigation reopened

Conflicting testimonies

INVESTIGATION into a recent attack by a student on a secondary school teacher who sustained a broken arm has been ordered reopened by senior Education Ministry officials.

An official at the ministry said that conflicting reports had been received on the incident from relevant school officials where the incident took place and, the testimony of 37 students who

witnessed the incident.

The incident took place when the teacher who wanted to attract the attention of the inattentive threw a piece of chalk at him.

Beating

The piece of chalk hit the student on the head and this made the class laugh.

The enraged student remonstrated with the teacher who ran

up to him and started beating him.

The student managed to break loose, which made the teacher lose balance and fall to the ground on his arm which resulted in the teacher sustaining a fracture and subsequent hospitalisation.

The student was ordered picked up by the police and was thrown into the juvenile prison.

Most testimonies collected from students who witnessed the incident certified that the student was one of the best, and that his innocent attempt to wriggle free caused the teacher to sustain his injury.

Meanwhile, the teacher seemed determined to go ahead with his law suit against the student despite efforts to dissuade him to drop the charges.

GDCA prepares to attract foreign airlines

KUWAIT, Dec 17, (Kuna): Deputy Director General of the General Department of Civil Aviation Yaqoub Yousef Al Saqer has said that the department has begun preparing a group of measures aimed at drawing in more foreign carriers to use Kuwait International Airport.

In a statement to a local daily, Saqer added that such measures fall in line with recommendations laid down by the Joint Economic Committee Report, which called on authorities concerned to work towards attract-

ing foreign planes and ships to use Kuwait land and sea ports.

He noted that the aviation department will submit a number of measures to the follow up committee, entrusted with implementing the economic committee's report, on this issue.

Foreign carriers have chosen in recent years to land at airports in other Gulf states instead of Kuwait International Airport, raising a highly-disputable issue among the authorities here. No immediate measures were taken to remedy the situation although six airlines stopped using Kuwait Airport.

The same paper quoted secretary of the Travel and Tourism Offices Association Tareq Al Naqib as saying that some airlines stopped using Kuwait Airport for two main reasons. The first is the royalty tax, paid by airlines to whose countries Kuwait Airways does not fly. This tax amounts to 10 per cent of the price for each passenger ticket.

Naqib added that the difficulty in obtaining visas and visiting permits also diverts these airlines from landing at Kuwait International Airport.



PAAET art exhibition

Dean of the College of Education at the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training, Dr. Ghannim Sultan yesterday opened an art exhibition for the students of the college. A number of professors and students attended the inauguration. The exhibition will continue till Dec 21. Twenty-two paintings in addition to many other handicrafts made by the students, were exhibited. The exhibition is open to the public daily from 8.30 am to 1.00 pm and from 5.00 - 8.00 pm.

Picture shows a student explaining to Dr Sultan about one of the paintings.

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Messages to Qaboos

MUSCAT, Dec 17, (Kuna): Three Gulf Co-operation Council and two Yemeni ministers left here last night after delivering messages to Sultan Qaboos Bin Said of Oman from their countries' leaders.

The GCC ministers, United Arab Emirates Information Minister Ahmed Bin Hamid, Saudi State Minister Mohammed Al Mubim, and Bahraini Housing Minister Khaled Bin Abdullah Al Khalifa.

The GCC summit is to start here Monday, where the six members states leaders are expected to arrive in the Omani capital later in the day.

The Yemen Arab Republic Health Minister Mohammed Ali Muqbil and the Democratic People's Republic of Yemen Fish Resources Minister Salem Mohammed Jabran left here after delivering a joint message to Sultan Qaboos from the two Yemeni presidents which dealt with the process of unification of two parts of Yemen.

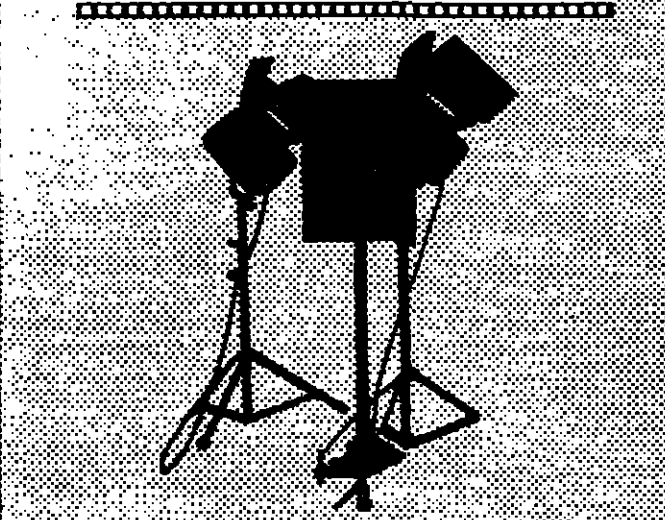
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Effluent treatment plant to control pollutants: Ajmi

THE director of the Department of Environmental and Earth Sciences at the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) Dr Dari Al Ajmi has said that the proposed construction of the central plant for the treatment of industrial effluent in the Shuaiba Industrial Area will largely contribute to controlling liquid pollutants, and providing ample quantity of water valid for use on the national afforestation project.

Concentrations

He told a local daily that within the framework of a study on marine pollutants along the coastline of the Shuaiba Industrial Area conducted by KISR, attempts are being made to identify the concentration level of existing pollutants and related sources.

He said that the Department of Environmental and Earth Sciences had actively contributed to the research studies

performed by the Shuaiba Industrial Area in the fields of air and marine environment, using mathematical models to forecast the concentrations of volatile pollutants in the air to utilise this data in studies aimed at controlling air pollution sources.

He said that the department was currently engaged in a study for the Shuaiba Industrial Area involving a massive survey intended to locate the sources of industrial effluent in the area which contained volatile organic compound in order to measure its concentrations through a chromatographic analysis using a mass-spectrometer.

He pointed out that the completion of these studies would help the Shuaiba Area Authority follow up its in-house research on the construction of the proposed Shuaiba plant for the treatment of industrial effluent and preparation of the anti-pollution programme for the area.

Legal Clinic



If you have a legal problem, labour or any other kind. Send your questions to Arab Times, Legal Clinic. Our Kuwaiti lawyer Khaled Taher replies to readers queries. Write to Legal Clinic, Arab Times, P.O. Box 2270, 13023 Safat, Kuwait or fax your questions on Fax No. 4847495.

I HAVE a Filipino maid with visa No. 20. She came to Kuwait in 1986 and spent three years with her previous employer. She is now under my sponsorship. I'm willing to change her visa No. 20 to visa No. 18. Please tell me what is the procedure to obtain a visa No. 18 for her?

M. Rashid.

WE regret to inform you that it is now not permissible to change visa No. 20 to visa No. 18. If you really intend to change your maid's visa, the only way you can do is to cancel the present no 20 visa and try to get a fresh No. 18 visa. This can be done through any trading firm you own. If you get the fresh visa, she will have to leave Kuwait and re-enter on the fresh visa.

I'M a Pakistani, living in Kuwait since eight years. Two years ago, I was working in a video shop as a salesman. One day, I was accused of theft for not entering the amount of KD1 in the accounts book. After the incident, I asked for a release, but he refused. At first he asked me to give him KD80 as a deposit for getting my passport. I agreed, and borrowed the money to get the document. Later, he demanded KD1,000. So, I approached the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour and got the release but my employer did not pay my dues. My employer, however, promised to repay the loan I had taken from my friend.

I am now working in another company and have a new residence. I want to claim three month's salary from my previous employer, KD80 deposited for my passport and KD100 I borrowed from my friend, plus two years service indemnity.

Can I take legal action against my previous employer?

Saleem.

IF the contract has not expired, then you have the right to file a case through the Social Affairs Ministry and claim any rightful dues. If you file a case, you may be asked to provide documentary evidence to prove your claim. I've given this advice based on what you said in the letter and I don't know what sort of documentary evidence the previous sponsor has against you. Also, you did not mention when you left the previous employer.

I'VE been working in Kuwait for the last 11 years. My present salary is KD200. I hold a No. 18 visa. My wife, who is in Sri Lanka, has been offered a job in Kuwait on visa No. 18. But she can't accept the job as my children, 7 and 5, cannot accompany her.

Please let me know if there is a possibility of bringing my children to Kuwait while or after my wife comes to Kuwait.

Kapila.

YOUR wife can come to Kuwait on a work permit, No. 18. After she has joined work, and the visa formalities have been completed, you can apply to the immigration to bring the children.

I made enquiries and was told that if both parents are working in Kuwait, you can apply for a visa at the Immigration Department, which reserves the right to accept or reject any application. If you get the visa, then you can call the children.

AFTER eight months stay in my country, my former employer sent a new visa and contract for me. I arrived in August only to find they didn't want to follow the terms stated in the contract. I was told that if I don't want to work on the prevailing terms, they'll send me back. The worst part is that they've threatened that I can't come back to Kuwait, because they will forbid my entry and will have me blacklisted. This is unfair because I never committed an offence. In fact they can't afford to pay the salary stated in the contract, and don't want to give me holiday. Due to these reasons I want to seek employment elsewhere. But they don't want me to find another job. If I find a new sponsor, willing to provide a new visa, can I cancel my present visa? Do I need to go back to my home country to re-enter Kuwait? What is the NOC visa?

Hernie.

YOU didn't say which type of visa you are holding. Each visa type requires a different answer, so it is difficult for me to answer your query.

If you hold visa No. 18, you can file a case against the employer in the Social Affairs Ministry, investigator's office, asking for a release provided you have completed three years employment. If you have not completed that period, you must continue with the present employer, or have your visa cancelled and leave the country.

If you are on visa No. 20, you can try to mediate the matter through friendly means, or try to get a transfer to a new sponsor by taking up the matter with a court to get a release. The name of the new sponsor can be given at the time of filing a case in the court. You can ask for your dues, as mentioned in the contract, giving a copy of the contract, duly signed, to the court.

You can't cancel your visa. Only a sponsor has the right to cancel an employee's visa. If you don't want to continue your employment, you can ask your sponsor to cancel the visa. You can't do it on your own.

I WAS interested to read a letter from D.B. and your reply concerning the situation of a non-Kuwaiti wife in the event of her Kuwaiti husband's death. Please clarify:

- 1) You said if the woman is non-Kuwaiti, then when her husband dies, the government house has to be sold. What if she has sons? Doesn't the ownership pass on to them? How old do they have to be to legally own the house and what happens if they are still children?
- 2) Do the relatives of the husband have any claim on the house? Can they force the wife and children to leave in order to obtain their share?
- 3) If a non-Kuwaiti has applied for Kuwaiti nationality and her husband dies before it has been granted, can she still obtain nationality?
- 4) Where does the non-Kuwaiti stand as far as her husband's salary after his death? Does she still receive his full salary or a percentage or nothing, presuming she has Kuwaiti children by her husband?

5) How does the non-Kuwaiti continue to have a visa in the future if her husband dies and her children are still young? I look forward to hearing from you and thank you in advance. Keep up the good work!

A non-Kuwaiti wife.

1. IF a non-Kuwaiti has a son, the ownership passes on to him but he has to pay the monthly instalment to the government.

2. The relatives cannot force a family to vacate the house, according to Kuwaiti law; it is not permissible to sell the house, if it is the only house they own. The relatives can't force the wife and children to leave the house, because the children, including a son, who are Kuwaiti, are eligible to inherit their father's property.

If the non-Kuwaiti wife has only daughters, the girls are entitled to 2/3 of the share in their father's property; the rest goes to the brothers of the deceased parent.

3. The rules say that a non-Kuwaiti wife has to be married to a Kuwaiti for a period of 15 years to be eligible to obtain nationality.

4. A non-Kuwaiti wife is not eligible to get any salary or a part thereof; any salary that may be paid will go to the children of the deceased parent.

5. If the children are of age, they can sponsor their mother; if the children are under age, according to the "hadannah al hiya" (a mother taking care of children), immigration rules, the wife will be allowed to stay to take care of the children. In other words, the immigration authority will grant a visa, on the sponsorship of the Kuwaiti children....

I'M a storekeeper, holding a visa No. 18, in a foodstuff company. I came to Kuwait in Aug 1988. My employer sent me a contract saying my salary would be KD90. He arranged a PTA (air ticket), the cost of which is being deducted from my salary. The contract states that I'll get a return ticket after completing three years service. It also says that I'm entitled to free medical care and free accommodation, and annual leave is according to Kuwait Labour Law.

Since my arrival, I've been paid only KD60. My company management says that the other contract was issued to get through the Emigration Department in India. Deductions are being made for the air ticket, residence fee and medical fees.

Since I'm a storekeeper I'm afraid my salary may be further deducted for alleged damages after the final audit. Am I eligible for any sort of "store risk" allowance?

X.C.

IF, as you say, the contract is not being honoured, you can file a case against the company, through the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour investigation office, asking for the difference in salary, and seeking the other benefits included in the contract. Any benefit mentioned in the contract can be claimed like free accommodation and food. The basic salary will be calculated on the basis of all the benefits like free accommodation, air fare, etc. to decide your claims.

To our knowledge, there is no Store Risk Allowance.

Kuwaitisation of teaching staff underway

THE General Education Co-ordination and Follow-up Department at the Ministry of Education has provided Kuwait University and the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training with an estimate of teachers requirements until the year 2000.

Disclosing this information to a local daily, Sheikh Al Mslam, the director said the department is actively involved in preparing studies and proposals aimed at the gradual Kuwaitisation of the teaching staff. She said that the department plays a vital role in developing and serving the educational process in the country and is involved in chartering the requirements of teachers at the Ministry of Education for the coming three years.

Further, the department undertakes studies related to issuing a set of standards to serve as guides when rating the performance of teachers. Such studies are also provided to those committees who are empowered to recruit overseas teachers, she said.

Mslam pointed out that the essential objective is to build co-ordination and co-operation between the ministry and educational areas and add improvements to the educational process in the country. In the field of developing the teaching staff and enhancing teacher performance, the department co-ordinates with the Training Centre and the supervisory authority at the ministry to organise training courses for nominees for supervisory posts.

The department also encourages the credit hours system at general education schools for development and expansions in addition to experimenting the application of computers at various educational states, the director said.

In a related development Kuwait University will grant university students a 50 per cent discount upon registering at courses offered by the Society Services Centre at the university, a service centre official said.

Deputy Assistant Director of Society Service at the Kuwait University, Dr Mohammad Abdul Rahman Al Sarawi said that this step aims at encouraging all university students to join and benefit from these programmes and courses presented by the centre.

Sarawi urged all university students to avail of this opportunity and benefit from it. The registration for the second academic term will start Saturday, Dec 23, 1989 at the exhibition hall located in the Science College at Khaldiya. Registration will continue until Dec 27, 1989, he said.

The new scheme will be implemented during the beginning of the spring term starting next February and will encompass a number of courses lasting throughout the spring holidays in addition to other courses offered by the centre during the second term and the summer term.

Level examinations for languages will be held for new students on Monday, and Tuesday, Jan 3 and 4, 1990 at the Science Hall in Khaldiya.

Courses at the centre for the second academic term will begin Saturday, Feb 17, 1990 and will end on May 20, 1990. Students are entitled to register for one or two courses during the academic term, the official said.

Voice of GCC to be beamed from Muscat

KUWAIT, Dec 17, (Kuna): 'Voice of the Gulf Co-operation Council' radio will be beamed from Muscat as of today on occasion of the 10th GCC Summit, opening in Oman tomorrow, according to a media leader here.

Assistant Information Under-secretary for Broadcast Affairs Dr Abdul Aziz Al Mansour said

that Voice of the GCC has been transmitted from Radio Kuwait for a year now, adding Oman would be hosting it to cover the events of the Gulf summit, opening tomorrow under Sultan Qaboos Bin Said of Oman.

Speaking at a ceremony marking the occasion at Kuwait Radio here this morning, Dr Mansour indicated that next year the GCC

radio would be transmitting from Qatar.

The official praised the dedication of a special broadcast to speak in unison for the Gulf individual and hoped that the GCC secretariat would consider establishing a GCC radio station that can transmit programmes round the clock and address a

wide audience in foreign languages.

He commended the personal support given to the experience by Kuwait's Minister of Information Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al Hamad and praised efforts made by Kuwaiti broadcasters to spread the GCC message among nationals of the six-member states.

Philippine embassy plans to establish school in Kuwait

ON several occasions since his arrival in Kuwait, the new Philippine Ambassador to Kuwait, Dr Mauryag Mohammad Tamano, has expressed his desire to put up a Philippine School in Kuwait. And with the prospect of the embassy relocating to its new building in Jabriya in the coming year, Ambassador Tamano's enthusiasm to put up a school is increasing.

An academican in his own right Ambassador Tamano was formerly president of the prestigious Mindanao State University in Southern Philippines, for six years. Later, he was Professor at the King Abdulaziz University in Jeddah for at least seven years. Now he comes to Kuwait as ambassador after leaving his previous assignment in the Philippine embassy in Riyadh, where among his major accomplishments was the establishment of the Philippine embassy in Riyadh, whose population has risen from a mere 64 students in 1985 to its present population of over 700, and is still growing.

It is with the vision, to fulfil the cherished dream of most Filipino families working here, that he comes to Kuwait.

He has expressed his apprehensions about the fulfilment of this dream, and hopes that all concerned Filipinos will come forward and volunteer their services towards the establishment of the school. If all concerned Filipinos will do so, the road may be long and hard, but the task will definitely be lighter as we all put our efforts together in the spirit of "Bayanihan."

First, a survey will have to be conducted to determine the number of prospective student applicants for the school. At the same time, the survey to be conducted will determine the number of Filipino teachers available here in Kuwait who may wish to apply for teaching positions in the school. It is envisioned that the Philippine school in Kuwait will be open not only to children of Filipino parents but also to children of

expatriates working in Kuwait who may wish to enroll their children in the school.

An initial study has been made and it has been found that the school, in order to be financially feasible, should have not less fifty (50) students initially. And in compliance with the laws of Kuwait, a Kuwaiti sponsor has to be found who is willing to do the legwork and liaise with the government, specifically the Kuwait Ministry of Education.

If anyone is interested, and would like to participate in this laudable project, please help conduct a wide-ranging survey as possible. The mechanics and questions regarding the establishment of the Philippine School in Kuwait will be another key topic in the Dec 22 "Miting de Advance" at the embassy. Survey forms will be distributed then.

So, let the embassy know if this dream is to become a reality or not by attending the "Miting de Advance" at 1 pm Friday, Dec 22, 1989 at the embassy grounds.

Handwritten signature or stamp at the bottom of the page.

Cabinet wishes success to GCC leaders

Political reports reviewed

KUWAIT, Dec 17, (Kuna): The Kuwaiti Cabinet today wished all success to GCC leaders in their upcoming Muscat summit in further strengthening fraternity among GCC nationals and boosting integration among their countries to realise the council's goals.

State Minister for Cabinet Affairs Rashid Abdul Aziz Al Rashid told reporters that Acting Premier, Foreign Minister

Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmed has briefed the Cabinet on issues to be tackled by the Gulf Co-operation Council's foreign ministers.

The GCC chief diplomats meet in Muscat this evening to prepare the agenda on the tenth summit scheduled to open tomorrow, Rashid went on.

He added that the Cabinet wished HH the Amir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmed and the accompanying delegation safe arrival in

Muscat and hoped that his efforts, along with the Gulf summiters, would succeed in deepening brotherhood and integration among the six member states in service of their people's interest and that of the Arab and Islamic nations.

For his part, Minister of Social Affairs and Labour Sheikh Nasser Mohammed Al Ahmed informed the Council of Ministers on the outcome of the ninth and tenth

sessions of the Arab social affairs ministers in Tunis and his subsequent visit to Hungary, Rashid said.

He added that the Cabinet reviewed a number of political reports on latest events in the Arab and international arenas.

Shifting to a number of domestic issues, the Cabinet approved the opening of a dispensary in Zour area and passed a number of decisions on other local issues.

GCC summit opens today

(Continued from Page 1)

recommendations and political report that will be referred to the 10th summit of the GCC supreme council.

This was contained in a press statement by Omani State Minister for Foreign Affairs Yusuf Bin Alawi following the end of the first preparatory meeting of the ministerial council.

GCC leaders will determine the strategies and policies to be taken to implement issues tackled in the political report.

Bin Alawi said peace, good neighbourly relations, detente and security will be given special attention by the supreme council.

The ministerial council will resume meeting tomorrow morning to continue discussion of remaining issues.

Abdullah Ya'qub Al Bishara, secretary-general of the Gulf Co-operation Council, said "first statement that the 10th meeting would be one of reassessment and determination."

Summit host Sultan Qaboos is expected to stress the need for the Gulf states to develop closer political and economic relations with Europe, especially due to the rapid changes there, diplomatic sources said.

The summit agenda includes the larger Arab world issues of attempting to solve the Palestinian problem, Lebanon's fractures and making the peace between Iran and Iraq a concrete reality.

Bin Alawi said the summit will also give a boost to the political and economic relations of the powerful armed forces of Iran and Iraq, will be on a back burner, diplomats said.

The Gulf countries are emerging from a decade of curbed economic activity.

Trade fell due to the shipping dangers caused by the eight-year Iran-Iraq war that ended in a ceasefire in August 1988. That problem was compounded by a fall in oil prices to below \$10 a barrel at times, forcing some area governments into deficit budgets.

All the Co-operation Council's members except Oman are also members of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries, and past summits have focused on Opec quota system.

The GCC states have been trying to diversify their economies to avoid the pitfalls of changing oil prices, and to have a firm economic base when the oil runs out.

"They have to put their money on the right horse," said one diplomatic source, speaking on condition of anonymity. "They cannot afford to waste investment money."

While the Gulf states have attempted to co-ordinate investment activity since they formed the GCC in 1981, the push to modernise often found them at odds.

The six-run four airlines — Saudia, Kuwait Airways, Gulf Air and Emirates — all competing for passenger traffic between cities rarely more than an hour apart.

Diplomatic sources said there is some concern among the states about Dubai's booming port, which captured much of the trade with goods-starved Iran by eliminating tariffs.

Joint investment efforts such as the Gulf Investment Corp., expected to plan projects to attract back \$150 billion invested outside the region, have yet to bear fruit.

Most restrictions on GCC nationals investing in other countries have been removed, at least on paper, but few businessmen take advantage of the opportunities, diplomats said.

"They would rather invest in a money market fund in a strong Western economy, and why not?" said one diplomat.

The goal of a common market by 1990 is going to be quietly cast aside, diplomats said, but the leaders do want to make progress in a tariff union and joint exploitation of resources such as the new natural gas field in Qatar.



Bahrain National Day

Bahraini envoy to Kuwait Isa Al Jama'a hosted a reception Saturday to celebrate his country's National Day. Picture shows Kuwait's Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmed sampling a piece of national day cake while Jama'a looks on.

Increasing divorce rate

Personal status courts not to blame: Othman

JUSTICE Minister, Dari Al Othman stressed yesterday that personal status courts in Kuwait play no role in encouraging divorce cases and denied the presence of any relation between the high divorce rates in Kuwait and these courts. Othman emphasised that many divorces take place before without being referred to courts.

He said that usually, the personal status courts do not get divorce cases until the dispute between the wife and husband has reached a very advanced stage and even in these circumstances, they constitute a small number of divorce cases in the country. He said that divorce is usually carried out outside the courts by the husband or his agent and this divorce is documented at the ministry's registration and communication department. Divorce cases that reach the courts are usually those filed by the wives against their husbands as only courts can grant wives divorce if reasons are justified.

Othman said that wives usually file divorce cases against their husbands after being harmed by them and realise that their life cannot continue that way. Other reasons that allow women to ask for divorce through courts include husbands who do not provide financial sustenance, absence of husbands for over one year without a reason and others.

Compromise

He said that concerning divorce cases because of harm, the courts should not issue any verdict before first attempting to achieve a compromise between the couples. In case this attempt fails, the court then appoints two men to try and achieve a compromise or ask for their separation if they realise that a compromise is impossible. Thus, the courts take enough time before issuing a final verdict in granting divorce.

Asked if there is any intention to ask the courts to provide a period of time to the couples to review their relations before granting the divorce, Othman said that the personal status courts at present follow this procedure and grant enough time before issuing a final judgement on the divorce.

Othman also denied that the present Personal Status Law has any loopholes. He said that it is totally based on the Islamic Sharia (rules) and it organises all affairs relating to marriage, divorce, custody of children, alimony and others. But the minister said that the study of the problem of divorce requires a comprehensive effort from all sides. Causes and types of divorce should be carefully studied and if necessary, some measures can be added to the law with the aim to help reduce the divorce rate.

Age groups

Giving their opinions on divorce in Kuwait, a number of people admitted the fact that the phenomenon is widespread in Kuwait. They said that almost one third of all marriages end in separations. Fahd Al Humaidan said that majority of divorce cases take place among couples in the age group between 18-26 years. He said that the lack of responsibility among parents, particularly the father, to meet the demands of the family such as unavailability of proper accommodation, low income, differences in opinions and behaviour besides the continuous interference of parents in the life of their married sons and daughters, are the major causes for divorce. Another called for forming a government committee to study the phenomenon of divorce in the country because it is a major threat to the foundation of society.

Kuwait shrimp catch improves

By Diana Abou Haidar
Arab Times staff

SHRIMP catch in Kuwait has rocketed from 1,788 tons in the 1985/86 fishing season to a record-breaking 5,125 tons in the 1988/89 season, due to the implementation of recommendations by Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR), Dr Mohammad Seif said.

Dr Seif was talking at the first "Kuwait Symposium on Shrimp and Fish Fisheries Management in GCC Countries" which opened at KISR yesterday.

Dr Ahmed Al Jassar, KISR's director-general, said that expanding the symposium, which used to be an annual local event, comes as a result of the successful implementation of such recommendations.

Addressing 85 researchers from GCC and other Arab countries and scientists from the United States of America and Australia, Abdul Latif Al Mugin, GCC's deputy associate secretary general for economic affairs, praised Kuwait's "outstanding role" in conducting and implementing scientific research in this field.

Management

He added that the GCC's Secretariat General has always supported such co-operative efforts. "We call on all scientists and specialists in the field of fisheries resources and marine environment in GCC countries to spare no effort in presenting studies about the state-of-fisheries resources in their countries, so that this symposium could contribute to organising the management of shrimp and fish fisheries not only in Kuwait's waters, but also in the whole Gulf," he said.

Papers presented at the three-day symposium will discuss shrimp fishery management, shrimp biology, finfish fishery management and finfish biology, in addition to marine biology and oceanography. Discussions are expected to result in a set of recommendations for the best methods for protecting and utilising the Gulf's fisheries resources.

People object to Friday Market closure

By Nawwaf Al Hamli

THE Friday Market, one of the most popular markets in the country, is witnessing an increasing response from consumers who look for goods at low prices.

Years have passed, and the market is still operating as a popular centre visited by customers of all social levels. Most shoppers at the Friday Market search for cheaper commodities.

Seyassa visited the Friday Market, and interviewed a number of consumers and pedlars to highlight their views towards the decision issued recently by the Joint Economic Committee. The decision called for the closure of the Friday Market after considering it an unjust competitive tool to other markets in the country.

Mohammed Raja a consumer said that he often comes to the Friday Market to search for low priced deals. He added that most shoppers belong to the lower social level group and have many requirements. He indicated that he escorts his family on a regular basis to the market in order to buy their needs.

He said that he is not in favour of closing the Friday Market because most low income families consider the decision as disadvantageous to them. He indicated that the closure of the Friday Market will harm many commercial interests in the country. Most shoppers will not shop at popular markets which show no mercy to consumers. The prices at the popular market are double those of the Friday Market, he commented.

He stressed that closure of the Friday Market will encourage merchants and other commercial establishments to increase the price of their goods in order to



Shoppers at the Friday Market looking for bargains.

exploit consumers.

Mutlaq Al Basman, a consumer criticised the closure of the Friday Market stating that the market has a wide variety of items with low prices. He believes that the decision will benefit merchants and harm consumers.

Hadi Mezal said that the Friday Market has been operating for several years and that he considered himself one of its regular loyal customers. He rejected the Joint Economic Committee decision calling for the closure of the market. He indicated that all prices offered at the Friday Market are subject to accurate censorship to ensure merchants did not exploit consumers.

Jamal Abdul Hameed stressed that he buys all his necessities from the Friday Market due to lower prices. He stated that most expatriates form the major buying power at the market, due to their low income compared with

other social levels. He proposed that prior to the closure of the Friday Market, stall owners should be given a fair period of time to look for other places to display their goods. He said that most pedlars at the Friday Market consider the market as their only source of income. He stressed that in case the Friday Market is closed, no other market will be able to replace it, due to its distinguished location closure to other commercial areas.

Source

Awad Eid, one of the stalls owners at the market believes that closing the Friday Market will harm many of his colleagues including him considering that it is their only source of income. He said that all pedlars at the market have rental contracts with the original owners of stalls and rents are considered symbolic. He explained that all goods displayed

are of good quality and consumers could find second hand and new items.

Kamel Yaseen, another pedlar at the market said that in case the Friday Market was closed officials should find an adequate replacement. He said that most of his colleagues at the market were not able to take up expensive rents at commercial complexes and therefore they resorted to the market due to its low stall rates.

Kathem Jawwad a dealer stated that the decision calling for the closure of the market is good due to the fact that the Friday Market is unjustly competitive. He said that activities at the market caused many problems for the local economy of the country. He added that prices offered at the market were much lower than prices offered at regular shops and that causes stagnation in the local market.

Take-home-pay registers decline

Growth prospects bleak: economist

THE existing slump prevailing in the local market is vividly reflected in the pressure on profit margins and many people are under the impression that with no tangible signs towards improvement in the purchasing power of people future prospects of an increase in market growth appear bleak.

To highlight the various aspects of this issue, a local daily interviewed a number of officials and merchants.

The chief economist at a banking institution commented that the current level of wages is not in keeping with the increase in the level of prices prevailing in the country. He said: "Individual incomes achieved no increase to keep abreast with the increase in prices of all commodities as well as the significant increase in prices". Thus, he said that over the years workers "take-home-pay" actually registered a decline.

However, he commented that the monetary liquidity had gained increased value in the light of the current situation and added that it stands at a higher level than at any time in the recent past.

Meanwhile, the daily quoted some managers of leading trading firms who deal with well-known brands as preferring not to take any commercial risks. These companies who have a "lion's share" of the market are aware of the "depressed nature of the public's frame-of-mind and as a result, these firms are refraining from making any added commitments.

This change of psychology of the merchants will not create any new opportunities of business and will result in a slow-down in business turnover and if not urgently redressed could lead to a serious market recession.

The director of consumers goods department at one of the leading trading companies was quoted as saying that the goods produced by international companies still enjoy the lion's share in the local market.

Costs

He commented that the consumption and purchasing patterns as evidenced at the market reflect a radical change. Consumers have drastically reduced their purchases, due to their inability to keep up with rising prices. The decrease in purchases is also attributed to the imposition of fees on a number of services and the realisation that family incomes are no longer capable to keep level with the continued hike in the cost of living.

An observer said that the catering sector, where normally a modest growth is registered have also taken a dismal outlook and cited this state-of-affairs to the reduction in population and to the restrictions imposed on family visas.

Projects

Another manager at a commercial establishment said that the marketing strategy followed by local suppliers has shifted towards importing consumer goods of inferior quality, but with far reduced prices. This is seen as an attempt to create a new

competitive market, he said.

A local agent of some commercial trade marks expressed confidence about the capability of international firms to hold their positions in the local market as these companies had set up joint projects for their products in the region — particularly in Saudi Arabia.

As an example, he said that most of the well known detergents are currently being produced by Saudi Arabia. He pointed out that these types of joint ventures between Saudi Arabia and international firms had reduced production costs and would eventually afford these companies the opportunity of monopolising business in the local markets.

Some merchants estimated that the volume of the local wholesale market to be KD300 million per annum and forecast that an increase in volume would not exceed 1.5 per cent during the coming year.

A section of the market is of the opinion that a reduction in local banking interest rates will enhance commercial activities in the local market. In this instance, as import costs would be less, it would give an edge to local merchants to increase local sales — specifically in the business of re-exports.

They added that the reduction of the interest rates will augment the imports averages which will automatically reflect on the activities of the local ports and will eventually enhance the capability of the local market to respond to requirements of the neighbouring markets.

Interest rates

They categorically commented that the current interest rates had increased import costs and severely retarded the competitive ability of local agents.

One merchant said that although the ceasefire between Iraq and Iran has held for over 16 months, no actual improvement was reflected in the local market. He added that the primary goal of merchants is to stay afloat in the current situation.

The merchant said that the near "static market conditions" are attributed to the freezing of employees salaries, drastic increase in house rents, introduction of new fees and levies for several services and job insecurity. All these factors had significantly affected the purchasing power of the market.

On the job security scene, the merchant said that the new labour law had negatively affected the purchasing power of the workers and severely restricted their ability to plan their expenditures on the basis that they will stay for any given length of time in the country.

Some merchants were in agreement that nine months ago, the local market had witnessed a significant rise in activity and attributed this to the entry of Iraqi merchants in the local market. These merchants had purchased some basic commodities and paid for these commodities in cash, they said.

Meanwhile, one banker said that local financial institutions had failed to deal with the

requirements of the Iraqi market on a long-term basis which should have been based on logical estimates of calculated risks.

He added that the local market had significantly lost a great part of its re-export activities particularly to the United Arab Emirates. He disclosed that some local merchants were currently undertaking business in the UAE in view of the facilities provided there.

Re-export

A majority of merchants called for encouraging the movement of the re-export trade, which according to them constituted the corner stone in economic re-activation.

They criticised what they called the bureaucratic complications at Kuwait ports and said that the current procedures involved had negatively affected the re-exports between Kuwait and other countries. In particular, merchants called for facilitating re-export procedures to Iraq.

A chairman of a leading company said the anticipated improvement in the commercial activities of the post Iraq-Iran war had not been realised and the optimistic wave prevailing in the region following the ceasefire between the warring countries had disappeared. He cited the policy followed by local banks and financial institutions for creating obstacles and impeding the reactivation movement in the local market.

He commented that while local banks imposed high interest rates on lending facilities, foreign banks extended competitive facilities. He called on the Central Bank of Kuwait to redress this state of affairs.

He confirmed that both Iraq and Iran will witness significant developments resulting from the rehabilitation of industries destroyed during the course of the eight-year war. He added that Kuwait would have a portion of the \$150 billion estimated for the total cost of projects to be carried out in the two countries.

Meanwhile, he disclosed that western governments are extending every assistance and guarantees to its exporters dealing with the region. He called for establishing guarantee corporations to support exports and re-exports of local firms. Setting up of these companies will improve the probabilities of local firms obtaining a major portion of business contracts to be awarded by both Iraq and Iran.

He said that he is fully convinced that contracting companies in co-operation with local banks will be in a position to support national industries.

Unfortunately, he said that he was not optimistic of the implementation of the necessary projects by the Gulf companies through the rehabilitation projects to be carried out in Iraq and Iran.

Speaking of the swap, the official said that although there were several opportunities for expanding this type of trade, the absence of specialised companies in this field make it a remote possibility.

Life sentence for murderer

KUWAIT'S Cassation Court has upheld the verdict issued by the Court of Higher Appeals sentencing a man to life with hard labour for murdering a man and attempting to murder another.

The case was previously tried by the Criminal Court who sentenced the accused to 15 years imprisonment with hard labour after it ruled that the murder was not premeditated.

The courts were told that the accused had an argument with two men. After some time, the three met again and the accused attacked both men with an iron rod. However, one of the defendants caught the accused and after took the rod away from him, the second defendant held on to the accused and the

first defendant started beating him.

But, the defendant took out a knife and stabbed the man who was holding him. He repeated the action a second time and killed the man. He then shifted to the second man and stabbed him, but the defendant managed to run away, with the accused accused unsuccessfully trying to follow him.

Both the Court of Higher Appeals and Kuwait's Cassation Court opined that by using the knife and stabbing the man twice in a sensitive place (his chest), the accused was determined to murder him. He also was determined to murder the other man, but failed solely because the defendant managed to make good his escape.

Rs 0.5m donation

ISLAMABAD, Dec 17, (Kuna): A charitable welfare organisation in Kuwait has donated half a million rupees for an under-construction eye hospital in Rawalpindi.

A cheque for the amount of Rs 500,000 was presented in this connection last night to President Ghulam Ishaq Khan by Syed Majid Al Rifai, chairman of the Kuwait-based organisation Lajnat Al Da'wa Al Islamiyah, when he called on him at the presidency here.

The donation by Lajna is in addition to Rs 10 million already contributed for the hospital project.

Jingle Bells

Jingle Bells

Com'n Folks let's celebrate Christmas at Le Mirage Ramada Al Salam Hotel on Dec. 31 Thursday from 9 pm — Buffet Midnight

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- * Childrens' Christmas Programme commences from 6 pm with games
- * Carol Singing, • Prize Distribution, • Fancy Dress Competition and • Kiddly Dinner 9 pm

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ARAB TIMES

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EDUCATE men without religion and you make them but clever devils — Attributed to Duke of Wellington, British general (1769-1852).

Cold war thawing
US searches for
'peace dividend'

WASHINGTON, (AP): The search is under way for the elusive "peace dividend" — billions of dollars in US government money that once would have gone for defence, but which politicians hope can be freed for other purposes.

In an election year, with the cold war thawing, the government is going to have to deliver one in 1990. After watching the Berlin Wall come apart, the voters are likely to insist on defence cuts more drastic than the administration of President George Bush deems wise.

Even though Defence Department planners say real savings are not likely to flow from events in the Soviet Union and its freed satellites until later, the peace dividend is too politically appealing to be postponed. There are no presidential elections in 1990, but there will be important races for the Senate and House of Representatives.

"When the tide's here, we're not going to be able to shovel it back out to sea, either," said Sen John Glenn, a Democrat. He forecasts major cuts, but worries that some may be premature.

One senator suggests the Defence Department should recall the words of Alexander Ladrin-Rollin, a leader in the French Revolution of 1848: "There go the people. I must follow them, for I am their leader."

Deficit

Reduced defence spending next year will have more to do with the demands of deficit reduction and with plans that already were in place than with the dramatic changes in Eastern Europe and the arms cuts now under negotiation with the Soviet Union.

The budget benefits that flow from those changes will come later, in 1991 and beyond, Defence Department planners say. But patient, cautious business as usual won't satisfy the political demands of the year ahead.

"We can talk in neat terms of threat strategy, translated into dollars in the budget, but outside the halls of Congress are some very active constituents in growing large numbers," said Sen John W. Warner, like Bush a member of the Republican Party. "And unless we have a real tight... partnership with the president, predicated on sound, real-time information, we might see that constituency get way out ahead of both the leaders in the executive branch and the legislative branch."

Warner made that observation at a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing last week. Senate Democratic leaders have asked that panel and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to consider the changes in the Communist bloc and weigh their impact on spending.

Inquiries

The New Year will bring dozens of congressional inquiries in both the House of Representatives and the senate as lawmakers look at potential savings and debate what to do with the money.

That debate may produce more sound than substance. At the end of every war, hot or cold, there's a wave of optimistic speculation about what will be done with the resources that no longer have to be spent on the military. The results don't match the expectations, sometimes because of post-war recessions, sometimes because the money has to go to old, unmet needs or to new ones that stem from the conflict just ended.

Former President Gerald Ford says and money freed by the easing of the cold war should go directly into deficit reduction, not into new federal spending.

Premature

Bush has said that would be his plan. But he also has said it is premature to talk about a peace dividend.

Ford said there wasn't any after the Vietnam war. He said it was absorbed by federal spending. It also was absorbed by a soaring inflation rate.

"We really never saw any beneficial result with the cutback... after Vietnam," he said at an American Enterprise Institute forum. "It scares me that we'll make the same serious error when it comes to whatever dividend you get."

Bush is expected to propose a \$292-billion Defense Department budget for the fiscal year that begins next Oct 1, less than the last administration budget sought, but more than Congress actually approved for the current budget year. Not much dividend there.

Changes

The administration warns that changes in the East and arms cuts promised by Moscow are incomplete and reversible. "If we attempt to pocket too quickly the benefits that we anticipate, then we risk undercutting the very strategy that has brought us to the brink of success," Paul Wolfowitz, undersecretary of defence, told the Senate hearing.

Wolfowitz said he'd plead guilty to caution, and that the Defence Department can foresee more substantial cuts in four or five years. With department stores selling chunks of the Berlin Wall for \$10 a caution and patience are going to be hard to maintain.

"Unless we're able to predicate our budget upon sound intelligence, sound planning, then we're not going to be able to hold a line," said Sen William Cohen, a Republican. "Constituents will demand that we make massive or substantial reductions well beyond what might be militarily prudent."

TODAY IN HISTORY

- 1559 — Queen Elizabeth I sends aid to Scottish lords to drive French from Scotland.
- 1644 — Queen Christina begins reign in Sweden.
- 1792 — Thomas Paine is tried in England in his absence for publishing "The Rights of Man."
- 1865 — Slavery is abolished in United States.
- 1890 — Frederick Lugard occupies Uganda for British East Africa company.
- 1903 — US-Panama Treaty places canal zone in US hands in perpetuity for annual rent.
- 1927 — Chiang Kai-Shek overthrows Hankow government in China.
- 1941 — German troops retreat in North Africa in World War II.
- 1948 — Dutch renew offensive in Indonesia and capture Sukarno government.
- 1956 — Japan is admitted to United Nations.
- 1961 — Indian forces invade Portuguese Goa; UN ceasefire in Katanga begins.
- 1965 — Nine African states break off diplomatic relations with Britain over Rhodesia issue.
- 1970 — Divorce law goes into effect in Italy despite opposition by Roman Catholic church.
- 1973 — Syria refuses to attend Middle East peace talks in Geneva.
- 1985 — Syria rejects plea by United States to remove newly deployed anti-aircraft missiles along its border with Lebanon.
- 1987 — Riot police break up protests and arrest 1,600 people in major crackdown after presidential election.



East Germans wait in their cars at the Wartha border crossing with West Germany on Nov 10 following opening of border crossings between East and West Germany. (Reuter wirephoto)

Big strides toward close ties

German reunification process begins

WEST BERLIN, (AP): While Europe faces the prospect of German reunification in the future, the two states are expanding ties so quickly that some observers believe the process already is taking place.

The United States and the Soviet Union insist they must have a say in any moves to merge the two Germanys, but the daily rush of events may outrun their ability to control the process.

Not a day has passed in recent weeks without prominent Germans visiting each other across the formerly closed frontier or another series of agreements being signed.

The East Berlin government insists it will stop short of a formal union and says it wants to preserve the socialist system. The West German government's position is that the East German people must be allowed to decide on reunification after free elections are held.

Intra-German co-operation ranges from large industrial projects to plans for single subway tickets for West Berlin and East Berlin, and completion of autobahn links severed in the postwar occupation of Germany.

For many countries, though, the wounds of Nazi leader Adolf Hitler's war are even now still too fresh to make the prospect of a united Germany a pleasing one.

The country would have 80 million people in the heart of Europe and economic power that would dwarf its neighbours. Some have voiced fears about an emerging "Fourth Reich."

"Our neighbours are worried and their fears are justified," says noted West German political scientist Joachim Ferels. "They are worried that things are moving too fast."

Josef Janning, an expert on East-West relations at the University of Mainz, agrees that West Germany must consult with other countries on its policy toward East Germany to allay these concerns.

"Now that the Germans are discovering their own national policy, there are justifications for fears. Bonn should not make any unilateral moves without consultations," Janning said.

But some sort of German unity cannot be prevented, not even the Germans can prevent it," he said in an interview.

West German chancellor Helmut Kohl angered some other countries within the Nato alliance by proposing a 10-point plan for eventual German reunification without consulting Bonn's allies.

European leaders have passed resolutions that hardly hide their fears of a mighty German state dominating the continent. US Secretary of State James Baker has urged a go-slow approach to German reunification.

The Soviets, who have nearly 400,000 troops in East Germany, have issued stern warnings against Western interference in East German developments, and have stated they oppose German reunification.

The leaders of the 12 nations in the European Economic Community have agreed that reunification must come through self-determination of the people in the two Germanys and in consultation with other European countries.

The European Parliament has urged West Germany to state "quickly and unambiguously" that, in the event of reunification, it would not try to incorporate former eastern territories that were lost in the war and now belong to Poland and the Soviet Union.

In East Germany, meanwhile, demonstrations have become more nationalistic.

"Germany united fatherland," thousands of people have shouted at mass rallies held on the past four Mondays in Leipzig, the hotbed of the opposition movement that unleashed the recent democratic changes in what once used to be a rigid communist country. Calls for quick reunification have been

made at other rallies in the country.

At the last Leipzig rally, angry exchanges broke out between supporters and opponents of reunification. The opposition movement has said it fears a split in its ranks over the issue.

Free elections in East Germany have been set for May 6, 1990, and at least two opposition groups have spoken in favour of reunification.

While East Germany's communist-dominated government officially opposed reunification, it has worked actively to expand ties with Bonn at all levels.

When holes began opening in the Berlin Wall, East Berlin and West Berlin police quickly established contact to deal with traffic problems and other mundane matters.

What began with such small steps has turned into giant strides one month later. Both sides seem to have dusted off contingency plans that have sat in bottom desk drawers for decades.

"What belongs together will grow together," former West German Chancellor Willy Brandt said, after the opening of the Berlin Wall, in a now often-quoted expression.

Kohl plans to travel to East Germany on Tuesday, a trip that will undoubtedly add impetus to trade ties between the two states.

Volkswagen, West Germany's biggest auto maker, has signed an agreement to co-operate in developing a new generation of East German Trabant cars. Dresdner Bank, the second-largest bank in West Germany, is considering opening branches in East Germany.

West German Economics Minister Helmut Haussmann returned Friday from talks in East Berlin that resulted in an agreement to set up a joint economic commission to expand co-operation.

US defence firms targetting Japan

TOKYO, (Reuters): A US defence industry addicted to hefty military spending is likely to look to Japan for more sales if the East-West thaw leads to leaner American military budgets, defence experts say.

And that could spell more friction between Tokyo and Washington over military spending, procurement and joint weapons development, they say.

"US defence contractors will see the free world's number three arms buyer (Japan) and think hell, we sell a lot already, let's sell more," said Simon Hookway, an industry analyst at brokerage Baring Securities.

Japan's military market could look even more attractive because Tokyo is unlikely to wind down its defence spending as soon as Washington, the experts say.

"The Japanese government is feeling pressure from events in Eastern Europe and the Soviet

Union, but there is a fairly widespread concern that the threat to Japan's hasn't been blown away," said a US defence expert.

"Until the Soviet Union acts to significantly reduce its naval power out here and draw down its manpower, the Japanese government will not feel it can slack off its effort."

Any export push by US industry would have the backing of both congressional critics of Japan's huge trade surplus and defence officials worried about a weakening of the US military industrial base, the experts say.

"There will be gross 'buy or die' pressure from congress," said the US defence expert. "The connection that they're going to make will be the trade imbalance, and there will be pressure on Japan to make more direct buys."

He added, "The Department of Defence will go beyond the trade issue and discuss the industrial

base. As procurement declines, the US defence industrial base will need help from overseas procurement to keep it healthy and to make research and development economically feasible."

But such pressure is destined to run smack into Japan's growing desire to develop and produce more of its own weapons, especially those with leading edge technology.

"The pressure from Japan to buy more from the US will increase, but Japan favours doing its own research, development and manufacture," said independent defence specialist Haruo Fujii.

Said Jardine Fleming analyst Steve Marvin. "Clearly there's going to be pressure from the US defence industry to expand exports to Japan, but Japan is unlikely to be willing to accept a big surge in weapons imports."

Art Buchwald

How lucky can you be with accidents

MY wife is one of the luckiest women in the world. Don't take my word for it — ask all her friends. Late this summer she tripped on a rock and broke her wrist. Ordinarily you would call this a piece of bad luck, but it turns out when she had the accident she did every thing just right.

This is the way the conversation went a day after the accident.

"My wife broke her wrist."

"Was it the right wrist or the left wrist?" the friend asked.

"The left," I said.

"She's lucky it was the left. If she broke the right it could be twice as inconvenient."

I said, "My wife has always been lucky when it comes to breaking a bone. It runs in her family."

The next friend, when informed about the accident, wanted to know if after she tripped she fell forward or backward. I said I wasn't sure and wanted to know if it mattered.

"Of course, it matters," he replied. "If she fell forward it was the best thing that could happen

because otherwise she could have injured her back. By breaking her fall with her hand she saved injuring her nose. You have one lucky woman there."

"Don't I know it," I said proudly.

By this time word had gotten out about the accident and experts on bones from all over the world was checking in.

One eyewitness said, "I was five feet behind her when she fell. At that moment I said to myself, if she has to break anything, I hope it's her wrist and not her leg."

"You were thinking what I was thinking," I said.

"I'm a skier so I know about fractures. Your luck depends on how you fall."

"Over the years she's always fallen right," I said.

The next-door neighbour said, "I heard your wife had a fall."

"Yes, she broke her wrist."

"I always look at the bright side. It could have been her hip. Some women are born

lucky."

"It will be in a cast for six weeks," I told him.

"She's fortunate it didn't happen at the beginning of the summer because you perspire under a cast and then you go crazy from the itch."

"That seems to be the consensus. Everyone is congratulating her that she didn't break it on the Fourth of July."

"The trick of any bone injury is to break it in the right place at the right time?"

"How can you do that?"

"When you break something you have to be in close proximity to an orthopaedic surgeon who isn't out playing golf when you need him. The real luck of falling down is to find the surgeon in his empty office playing solitaire."

"Our doctor wasn't even out fishing."

"Then she really is a lucky woman. I hope she realizes it."

"She does — she counts her blessings every time she falls."

Los Angeles Times Syndicate

Letters to the editor

Married for love

SIR: May I, through the Arab Times, reply to the anonymous English person who reckons English girls only marry Arabs for their money.

When we met our husbands, we fell in love with the men. Most of them were students struggling on grants. We would have lived in tents and rode camels for transport if necessary to be with the men we loved.

Most of our husbands earn an average income, we have average lifestyles — sheikhs do not usually marry outside their families.

We made great sacrifices to be here, all left their families, friends, expert medical care, first class educational establishments, a wonderful climate, beautiful scenery and so many other things you cannot put a price on. Let me tell you there is no luxury in 120°F heat and sandstorms, or when your child is desperately ill and you wonder whether he is getting the care he should, or when you get that dreaded call from home to say a parent or relation is very ill or has died.

We are here because we fell in love with men of a different culture. It's the choice we made for love not money.

You insulted us greatly, anonymous English person, and it's a disgrace you didn't have the courage to put your name to these accusations. May I suggest it's you who is here for the money, you gave up everything I mentioned above and suffer the same ordeals, just for cash — what else is here for you?

Referring to Love Lost articles, while some points were very good, the legal aspects for instance, the rest was pure sensationalism.

There are two sides to every story, we mustn't forget that. I know the background to some of the stories and I think some of the women brought a lot on themselves by their attitude and behaviour.

We contacted one of your journalists to suggest she show the other side of the coin, the marriages that do work, through co-operation and understanding from both partners.

They must take the best from each other's cultures and leave the worst and should be able to admit that each culture does have its good and bad side.

Unfortunately, this didn't impress your journalist. It didn't fit in with her opinion of mixed marriages being doomed to fail with the women always being the victim. Although we spent considerable time and effort conveying our point of view, we were only afforded a six-inch column to prove our point — how unfair!

Maybe it wouldn't have been so sensational, but it would have been a lot more useful to anyone experiencing problems at the moment.

E. Haidar, Amman.

ALL Letters to the Editor must contain the writer's name and address. Publication is at the discretion of the Editor and letters are subject to the editing process for space or other reasons.

Quote me

"I felt ill because I ate something that upset my stomach. Then I drank and took some sleeping pills. I don't remember anything else. They exaggerated this story." — Bjorn Borg on Feb 9, dismissing reports that he had attempted suicide in Milan a day earlier with an overdose of barbiturates.

"But some corrupt elements abuse our hospitality and spy, spread corruption and drugs and move around without identity cards." — Interior Minister of Iran Abdollah Nouri told leaders of a Tehran-based Afghan rebel coalition that Iran backed their struggle.

"When the reformist-nationalist soldiers of the people will finally launch 'phase II' of the (coup) in the near future... the people will come in jubilation because of their liberation from the sharp clutches of Mrs Aquino's reign of hatred, greed, lust and terror." — Col Gringo Roisan, rebel leader in a letter published in a Philippine opposition paper.

"If the Sandinistas wish to further the goals of the peace process, including voluntary demobilisation, repatriation and reintegration of resistance members under secure and democratic conditions, they should renew their direct talks with the resistance." — State Department deputy spokesman Richard Boucher.

"He was just a remarkable person. There was this fantastic courage and among the scientific people there was a tremendous capacity for original thought." — said British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher about Sakharov.

"All of us who knew him will never forget his courage and devotion to freedom. In the darkest hours of his struggle for human rights in the Soviet Union, he embodied all that is good and decent in the human spirit." — US President George Bush said about Sakharov in his condolence message.

"It's like dropping someone in the ocean who doesn't know how to swim. If they survive, they can learn to swim." — said V.M. Falin, chief of the international department of the Soviet Communist Party's Central Committee.

"China today has old leaders. In a few years new leaders will take their place. The reform period starting then will lead to democracy and more freedom. That will make it easier to solve human problems." — Dalai Lama said when asked to describe his vision for China in the next decade.

"The interest and recognition the peace prize has given my work of promoting compassion and non-violence has been of great help and has also focused upon the rights of the Tibetan people." — Dalai Lama said.

"The Communist Party has 1.7 million members, all of them are our compatriots and there are countless people among them who are among the same as we are and who want this country to live in democracy." — Vaclav Havel of Czechoslovakia said in an interview.

"I think now we all feel like orphans. He was more than a man, more than a scientist, he was one of the greatest men of this century. We never had a moral leader at this level. His death is a major tragedy for democracy. He was killed by the system of authoritarianism that he fought all his life." — Reformist parliamentarian Vitaly Korotich on Sakharov.

"I don't know how I did it. You know, I was 18 years old. I don't know if I could do it now if I had to. Sure, I had some misgivings, but it didn't really hit home that I couldn't see my parents maybe for 10 years. It ended up being five years, but when you are 18 you don't think in those terms of 5 or 10 years. You think you're going to live forever and you are going to play tennis forever. Now, when I look back, I think, God, how did I ever have the guts to do it? I am glad I did it. The only regret I have is that I was forced to do it. I couldn't see my family and I had to give that up so that I could pursue my dream, and that was to play tennis wherever and whenever I wanted to." — Martina Navratilova on her defection to the US.

1500 11/15/89



Israeli soldiers wearing plastic gloves carry the body of a Palestinian man, found dead in the east Jerusalem neighbourhood of Jabel Mukaber. (Reuters wirephoto)

Hamas warns of retribution

Peace talks rejected

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM, Dec 17, (Reuters): Islamic militants in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, in a leaflet distributed today, spurned US and Egyptian efforts to involve them in proposed peace talks with Israel.

The Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) also warned of retribution against Palestinians who took part in such negotiations.

The leaflet accused Egypt of undermining the Palestinian uprising against Israeli occupation and slammed US Secretary of State James Baker's proposals for Israeli-Palestinian talks in Cairo.

"Hamas considers anyone who takes part in negotiations based on the Baker plan as against the will of the Palestinian people and the people will settle accounts with him," it said.

Israeli Cabinet Secretary Elyakim Rubinstein left for

Washington today to discuss a proposed meeting of Israeli, US and Egyptian foreign ministers on the question of peace talks.

In Nabulus in the West Bank, masked Palestinian youths shot and axed to death an alleged Arab collaborator with Israel in an attack bearing the hallmarks of the city's Black Panther death squad.

Diplomatic sources have said the United States, Egypt and the PLO are working to bring Hamas into a Palestinian delegation for the planned peace talks in an effort to neutralise its opposition.

The PLO, which claims to represent the majority of Palestinians, says it supports a Palestinian state alongside Israel, while Hamas regards both Israel and the occupied territories as Arab land to be ruled under Islamic law.

Muslim activist Mahmoud Al

Zahar held separate talks last week on possible Hamas participation with Ahmad Tawfik, an aide to Egyptian Ambassador Mohamed Bassiony, and Brigadier Arie Shiffman, head of occupation administration in the Gaza Strip.

Palestinian sources said Zahar told Tawfik that Hamas was ready in principle to join negotiations on Palestinian self-rule and take part in elections to choose the negotiators.

"Hamas stresses at this stage people should relate to its political positions only according to the official leaflets and that nobody now inside occupied Palestine represents Hamas publicly," it said.

Israeli security sources said the leaflet might be an attempt by Hamas to raise the price of its participation in talks to four or five seats on a twelve-man delegation rather than the one or two so far offered by the PLO.

Christmas festivities in Holy Land scrapped

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM, Dec 17, (Reuters): Leaders of the Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox and Armenian Catholic communities in the Holy Land have cancelled some Christmas celebrations this year in solidarity with the Palestinian uprising.

In a statement issued at the weekend, the heads of the three communities said festivities would be restricted to religious ceremonies and prayers.

Other events such as parades and receptions would be scrapped but the traditional midnight Mass is expected to go ahead in Bethlehem, biblical birthplace of Jesus Christ.

The statement said the three leaders decided "to restrict Christmas celebrations to liturgical ceremonies and prayers for justice and peace and to cancel all Christmas festive visits and other manifestations in sympathy with those who mourn their beloved ones."

The statement said Roman Catholic Patriarch Michel Sabbah, Greek Orthodox Patriarch Diodoros and Yeghishe Derderian, head of the Armenian Catholic Church in Jerusalem, made the decision this week.

It will be the third low-key Christmas in succession for Bethlehem and other Christian towns in the occupied West Bank and Israel itself.

The Palestinian uprising began in the West Bank and occupied Gaza Strip two weeks before Christmas, 1987.

Rebels repulse attack

50 Kabul soldiers killed

ISLAMABAD, Dec 17, (AP): US-backed insurgents claimed today that they killed 50 communist troops when they repulsed a recent government offensive west of Kabul, the Afghan capital.

Midia, a joint rebels news agency, also reported heavy losses on both sides in clashes up north near the Soviet border. The agency said rebels killed 20 officers and 30 soldiers, and destroyed three tanks and five other military vehicles.

The three-day battle, which began on Dec 11, started when government troops attacked rebel positions in the Paghman Heights overlooking the capital, it said.

The agency said in a dispatch by telex that government troops were driven back to within 10 kms (six miles) of Kabul. It said two rebels and two civilians were killed in the fighting.

Official Afghan media have not reported any such offensive but Radio Kabul, monitored in Islamabad, said on Dec 15 that government forces found and destroyed 50 rebel rockets in the Paghman area.

Western diplomats in Islamabad previously reported that the mujahideen seized an important government stronghold in Paghman in early November, and have fought off several army thrusts to retake it.

Midia also said today that "both sides have sustained considerable losses" in clashes on Dec 6 and 8 in Daulatabad in northern Balkh province, about 27 miles (45 kms) south of the Soviet border.

It claimed that 22 government troops and militiamen were killed and 20 deserted to the mujahideen, or Islamic holy warriors, as the rebels call themselves.

The agency said the government responded with "indiscriminate" bombing and shelling which killed 20 rebels and civilians, including two rebel commanders. It said 40 others were wounded, and that the fighting continued.

Such a level of combat in northern Afghanistan is unusual for the onset of winter, when snow blocks mountain passes and generally forces a seasonal lull.

Egypt revives plan to build nuclear power plant

CAIRO, Dec 17, (UPI): Prime Minister Ataf Sidki apparently has decided to revive Egypt's nuclear power programme, unveiling a development plan yesterday that calls for eventual building a nuclear plant at Al Daba on the Mediterranean coast.

Egyptian plans to begin a nuclear power programme were put on hold following the April 1986 disaster at Chernobyl in the Soviet Union. After the accident, President Hosni Mubarak asked then-prime minister Ali Lufi

to reconsider Egypt's ambitions plan to build eight nuclear plants by the year 2000.

Sidki did not mention the nuclear programme during a three-hour address to parliament on his government's aims for the coming year. But in a statement carried later by the Egyptian news agency Mena, Sidki indicated the government would complete the infrastructure for the Al Daba plant in 1990.

"In the nuclear field, the 1990 plan emphasised that the studies regarding Egypt's power-

generation nuclear programme, the need to absorb nuclear technology and control it by concentrating on training in nuclear technology field would have to be finished along with completing the infrastructure for the site of the nuclear station at Al Daba," the statement said.

If completed, the proposed 1,000-megawatt nuclear power station at Al Daba, located on the Mediterranean coast 100 miles west of Alexandria, would be Egypt's first nuclear reactor.

Syrian diplomat escapes bomb attack

BRUSSELS, Dec 17, (Reuters): A senior Syrian diplomat in Brussels escaped injury yesterday when a sharp-eyed embassy chauffeur noticed two grenades fixed under his car and raised the alarm.

Belgium's national news agency Belga said later an anonymous caller claimed responsibility for the failed car bomb attack in the name of "The Survivors of Hama," a group apparently linked to Syria's fundamentalist Muslim Brotherhood.

Syria's ambassador to Belgium, Siba Nasser, named the diplomat as First Secretary Anwar Al Fadel, 40, who is in charge of consular affairs at the Brussels embassy.

She told Reuters the chauffeur was driving past by chance, spotted the car parked on a busy street where Al Fadel had stopped to do some shopping and noticed the grenades attached under the driver's seat. A police spokesman said the grenades

were fitted so their pins would drop out with the motion of the car. One was on the verge of exploding when police defused the devices, he said.

Belga said later that an anonymous caller phoned it saying: "The Survivors of Hama" claim the attempted assassination and execution of the Alawite consul.

The Syrian government is dominated by minority Alawite Muslims. In a major military crackdown in 1982, government

forces attacked the city of Hama, the Brotherhoods' stronghold in central Syria. Thousands of casualties were then reported.

In October 1987 another first-secretary at the embassy, Antonios Hanna, was shot dead outside his home. Anonymous callers claimed responsibility, saying they represented groups called the Syrian Mujahideen of the People.

Open up borders for raids: Habash

KUWAIT, Dec 17, (AP): Radical Palestinian leader George Habash has called for more attacks on Israel via Arab countries bordering the Jewish state to support the uprising in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, a Kuwaiti daily newspaper reported today.

It quoted Habash, leader of the Marxist Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, as saying there were 10,000 PLO fighters in Lebanon who should be used for cross-border raids.

The Syrian-backed Popular Front is the second biggest group in the PLO after Yasser Arafat's Fatah organisation.

The PLO has been estimated to have around 5,000 hardcore fighters in South Lebanon. Habash did not elaborate on his claim there were 10,000 commandos there.

Habash, like other Palestinian radicals, has been critical of Arafat's peace initiative.

"In order to enable the uprising to accomplish its political objectives and bring about a change in the Israeli attitude, it is imperative to inflict losses on the Israeli Army through Arab borders," he declared.

"What are 10,000 fighters doing in Lebanon? Why don't we think seriously of fighting across the borders of all Arab states without exception?" he asked.

"Why don't we inflict human losses on the Israeli army through raids and ambushes outside the uprising area?"

The uprising began two years ago in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza, where some 1.7 million Palestinians live. The Israelis seized the territories in 1967 war.

"We painfully feel that idle forces exist at a time when the uprising is going on," Habash declared.

The recent time necessary that the uprising should be coupled with the armed struggle," the commando campaign against Israel.

Some 8,000 PLO fighters evacuated Beirut when the Israeli army invaded Lebanon in 1982. Several thousand more were driven out of the North Lebanon port of Tripoli a year later in a Syrian-backed army by Palestinian radicals opposed to Arafat.

The fighters, based in other Arab countries since then, have been filtering back into Lebanon in recent years.

Criticising the PLO leadership for concentrating on political activity, Habash said: "The leadership which wants to wait a battle should exploit all its cards. These cards include 10,000 fighters in Lebanon and our masses in the 1948 area (Israel proper)."

But he said turning the uprising, in which young rioters battle with Israeli army with stones and firebombs, into an armed revolt would be a mistake.

He contended that would provide Israel with the pretext "for the total destruction of the refugee camps and our Palestinian masses."

GDR move to establish ties with Israel

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM, Dec 17, (AP): East German Premier Hans Modrow told an Israeli newspaper that in a move to establish diplomatic ties with Israel, his country is willing to change its longstanding policy of denying responsibility towards Nazi Holocaust victims.

"We have approached Israel officially with a request to discuss establishing diplomatic relations," Modrow was quoted as saying in an interview today in the respected daily Haaretz.

Israel has not yet received such a request, but welcomed what he called "unambiguous signs of 'repentance' by Soviet bloc nations for their unwavering support to the Arab world."

Many East bloc countries that broke ties with Israel after the 1967 Middle East war have expressed interest in re-evaluating relations. But Israel never had diplomatic ties with East Germany.

Israel has rejected the German Democratic Republic's claim that it bears no responsibility for what happened during the Holocaust because it did not exist then.

However, when Modrow was asked about his presents to Holocaust survivors, he told Haaretz: "We certainly prepared to discuss the issue with official representatives of the Jewish organisations dealing with it and of Israel."

Radicals win Iran Parliament seats

Test for Rafsanjani

NICOSIA, Dec 17, (AP): Radical opponents of Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani have won parliament seats in special elections to fill nine vacancies in the 270-member house, according to initial results released yesterday.

Tehran radio said former Interior Minister Ali Akbar Mohtashemi secured 225,570 votes, and Hojatoleslam Movahedi Kermani got 287,921 of the nearly 700,000 ballots cast in the elections on Friday.

The broadcast, monitored in Nicosia, listed four other candidates leading the contest for the two other Tehran seats, while results from provincial cities for five vacancies still were incomplete.

Diplomats in Tehran said the elections were a test for Rafsanjani and his efforts to open up Iran following the death of Iran's revolutionary patriarch Ayatollah Khomeini last June.

Those competing for the remaining Tehran seats are Maryam Behrooz, former commerce minister Habibollah Asgarowadi, former labour minister Abolqasem Sarhadzadeh and former posts and telegraph minister Morteza Nabavi.

Mrs Behrooz is one of the candidates fielded by a woman's group headed by Zahra Mostafavi, Khomeini's daughter.

Mohtashemi and the former ministers were dumped for their radical leanings by Rafsanjani when he formed a cabinet following his election on July 28.

Kermani also is a hardliner who was the personal representative of Khomeini in thegendarmerie.

He reportedly resigned his post last February due to a heart condition.

The radicals oppose efforts by Rafsanjani to improve Iran's relations with the West to end a decade of isolation and secure badly needed investment for economic reconstruction following last year's ceasefire in the 8-

year war with Iraq.

They fear that his efforts to liberalise the economy and society will undermine revolutionary fervour and the ideological purity of Khomeini's teachings.

Mohtashemi, 43, is closely linked with Shiite Muslim extremists in Lebanon who are believed to hold most of the 18 Western hostages there.

He was also involved with militants who carried out suicide bombings against the US embassy and the US marine base in Beirut in 1983, killing hundreds of people.

Before he died, Khomeini mediated between the pragmatists and radicals, preventing neither from becoming dominant.

But the power struggle has intensified since Rafsanjani became President and began sidelining his opponents.

The Majlis is already dominated by radicals of various stripes and further gains by hardliners will intensify the strains on Rafsanjani that are already starting

to surface.

His ambitious efforts to get the economy moving have been hampered by corruption and a bloated, inefficient bureaucracy, as well the hardliners.

Most of the seats contested in this week's election were left vacant when Rafsanjani appointed legislators to posts in his new administration.

The Tehran Times daily, which is considered to reflect Rafsanjani's thinking, indicated today that the President may seek a conciliatory line with his radical rivals.

Iran quoted the newspaper as saying in an editorial that Mohtashemi's election will "only enrich the Majlis debates and assist decision-making."

It castigated the Western media for highlighting political differences in the Tehran hierarchy and said those "in no way keep those who believe in the Islamic Republic and the lofty goals set for this Muslim society from fully co-operating with one another."

Iraq is seeking territory, says Iran

NICOSIA, Dec 17, (Agencies): Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati accused Iraq today of blocking UN-sponsored peace talks in the hope of territorial concessions.

"The Iraqi regime, by hindering the process of the peace talks, was after getting concessions from Iran but the Islamic Republic of Iran is determined to firmly resist any Iraqi ambition," he told the Iranian news agency Irna.

Velayati was speaking in Tehran on his return from talks in New York with UN Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar.

Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz said on Thursday Iran had a "selective, opportunistic" attitude to ceasefire terms.

Aziz and Velayati held separate unsuccessful talks with Perez de Cuellar last week to try to replace the August 1988 Gulf war ceasefire with a definitive settlement.

Velayati said the United Nations had rejected an Iraqi proposal for the establishment of expert committees to work out a permanent settlement.

In Baghdad, a senior official said today Iraq is willing to exchange all ailing and disabled prisoners of war with Iran, ending a year-old impasse.

But the fate of nearly 100,000 captives held by both sides remained deadlocked. Some have been prisoners since the early days of the Gulf war that broke out in September 1980.

Akram Al Witri, chief of the legal department in Iraq's Foreign Ministry, said Iraq's response to a proposal by the International Committee of the Red Cross to exchange all ailing and wounded prisoners was "positive."

But Witri, the chief Iraqi negotiator with the Red Cross, said he will give Baghdad's official answer soon.

He noted that Iraq has no objection to repatriating all sick and wounded prisoners it captured during the 8-year Gulf war if Iran does the same.

Witri spoke after meeting yesterday with Angelo Gnadimier, the ICRC's Middle East chief, who is visiting Baghdad to finalise the plan.

MIDEAST BRIEFS



Crackdown likely

Egypt is likely to launch a fresh crackdown on Muslim fundamentalists after a botched attempt on Saturday to kill hardline Interior Minister Zaki Badr, analysts and diplomats said.

Asked whether a roundup of outlawed opponents of President Mubarak's government was likely, political commentator Tahseer Bastir replied: "definitely."

As Western diplomats and Reuters: "This (attack) could lead to a new wave of arrests."

A pick-up truck carrying explosives blew up 30 metres (yards) from Badr's motorcade in Cairo on Saturday morning but the minister was not hurt.

"It was not an accident. It was an attack," one Interior Ministry source said.

Soviet offer

KUWAIT, Dec 17, (Kuna): Sources of the US State Department have affirmed that the Soviet Union has recently offered pledges and guarantees to Israel that it will avoid concluding any new military deals with Syria and other Arab countries such as Iraq, Libya, and Algeria to provide them with modern and sophisticated weapons.

A Kuwaiti newspaper quoted official sources from US State Department as saying that the Soviet Union has made pledges to encourage those Arab countries, especially Syria, to join peace efforts in the area of Israel, on its side, agreed to give Moscow an effective role in the peace process in the Middle East.

Execution

KHARTOUM, Dec 17, (AP): A 25-year-old man convicted of illegal foreign currency dealing was hanged, and buried today in the first execution carried out by the military junta that took power last summer.

Magdi Mahgoub Mohamed Ahmed was sentenced to death early this month along with Ali Behir Marioud, also convicted of black-marketing in foreign currency. The military government introduced tough foreign exchange regulations last July which made dealing in black market a capital crime.

New Algerian party

ALGIERS, Dec 17, (Reuters): A new political party in Algeria called today for a secular and multilingual state to be established.

The Rally for Culture and Democracy (RCD) also demanded the separation of religion and politics as well as revising the constitution stipulating that Algeria is an Arab state.

Turkish gunbattle

DIYARBAKIR, Turkey, Dec 17, (Reuters): Turkish soldiers killed six Kurdish rebels in a gunbattle early today in southeast Turkey, security sources said.

The battle between troops and guerrillas of the Marxist Kurdish Workers' Party erupted in rugged terrain near the town of Eruh, 80 km (50 miles) north of the Iraqi border, they said.

Compensation

WASHINGTON, Dec 17, (Kuna): The Iraqi government has agreed to compensate US sailors wounded in 1987 when one of its warplanes accidentally launched missiles at the USS Stark on patrol in the Arabian Sea. Iraq's newly appointed ambassador to the United States has said.

Thirty-seven sailors were killed and 21 wounded when the Stark was hit by two Iraqi missiles. Iraq, which apologised the following day, already has paid claims of about \$750,000 to families of the dead.

Rocard's visit

TEL AVIV, Dec 17, (Reuters): French Prime Minister Michel Rocard will meet Israeli and Palestinian leaders during a brief private visit to Israel starting today.

Despite public expressions of friendship on both sides, Israel and France are deeply at odds over a role for the PLO in Middle East peace efforts.

Ben Ali in Iraq

BAGHDAD, Dec 17, (AP): Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali arrived yesterday on a three day official visit to Iraq and held a first round of talks on bilateral relations with President Saddam Hussein.

The Tunisian leader also discussed with Saddam countries Arab issues, the state-run radio and television reported.

US court ruling next week on further damages

Marcos-backed slayings

SEATTLE, (UPI): A federal judge will rule in the next week whether two additional defendants in a civil lawsuit stemming from a double slaying orchestrated by late Philippine president Ferdinand Marcos should be held liable for damages.

A US district court jury ruled Friday that Marcos was directly responsible for the 1981 murders of two cannery workers in Seattle as part of a drive to eradicate political opponents in other countries.

The jury awarded the family of Silme Domingo \$12.7 million in damages and \$2.5 million for the family of Gene Viernes.

Plaintiffs' attorney Michael Withey said

the verdict "sends a message to other foreign governments that want to send spies and assassins to this country to think twice."

Defence attorney Richard Hisey said the verdict would be appealed.

The dead men's survivors successfully contended in the wrongful-death suit that Marcos, his wife, Imelda, and Gen. Fabian Ver, former chief of Philippine security, sent agents to the United States under cover as consular personnel to establish and operate a network of loyalists to work against anti-Marcos dissidents.

The plaintiffs contended Constantine "Tony" Baruso, president of the Cannery

Workers Union, was paid \$15,000 by Dr Leonilo Malabed, Marcos' childhood friend, to kill Viernes and Domingo, who succeeded in getting the international union to pass a resolution opposing the Marcos government.

Philippine Congressman Bonafacio Gillego testified during the civil suit that an intelligence "slush fund" provided \$15,000 "for the murders" of Domingo and Viernes.

US district judge Barbara Rothstein now must decide whether co-defendants Baruso and Malabed also are liable. Baruso, whose submachine-gun was identified as the murder weapon, was not charged in the slayings and claims the weapon was stolen.

A system that divides

Strengths and weakness of democracy in Philippines



Troops on alert at a military check point in Manila. (Reuter wirephoto)

MANILA, Philippines, (AP): The government's efforts to repair the damage wrought by the recent failed coup have been largely rhetorical, partly because of a fragmented political system designed to prevent rather than encourage decisive presidential rule.

It is widely assumed here that President Corazon Aquino must make sweeping changes in her administration and style of leadership if the nation is to recover from the political, economic and social damage brought on by the Dec 1-9 military mutiny that nearly ousted her.

More than a week after the last of the rebels surrendered, there has been no cabinet change nor any announcement of major shifts in domestic policy.

But the Philippine political system, which Aquino proudly describes as a "restored democracy," is designed not for speed, but to divide power after 20 years of strongman rule under the late president Ferdinand Marcos.

For better or worse, the Aquino administration and the electorate it represents are discovering what that entails in time of crisis.

In a bid to restore public confidence, Aquino declared on Dec 6 a state of national emergency. Ten days after the announcement, the emergency exists in name only because Congress has not ratified the final version of a bill spelling out what new powers she can wield.

On Monday, the Senate and House of Representatives are to take up a compromise version worked out by legislative conference committee last week.

But the compromise formula grants few new powers beyond price controls, state operation of public utilities and recovery of "loose firearms."

Congress also amended the original proposal to require adherence to the constitution, language that virtually guarantees court challenges once the government begins implementing the bill.

For example, the compromise bill does not allow the government to arrest suspects without warrants or circumvent other legal restraints. Congress watered down proposed curbs on the right to strike, media reporting and powers of search and seizure.

Even with the changes, the emergency powers bill has stirred considerable adverse comment among a people with bitter memories of martial law, which Marcos imposed from 1972 until 1981.

"We see a repeat of the Marcos regime," wrote columnist Neal Cruz in the Philippine Daily Globe. "Marcos refused to heed appeals for reform. Instead, he declared a state of emergency, then imposed martial law... now that housewife (Aquino) is turning out to be another Marcos."

In the heady days after the 1986 "people power revolution" that toppled the Marcos administration, Aquino appointed a commission to draft a new constitution to guarantee no more one-man rule.

The commission restored the US-style bicameral legislature precisely because Marcos had been successful in transforming the single-house national assembly into a rubber-stamp chamber.

Last week, the system worked as planned: Congress refused to give the administration everything it wanted.

The constitutional system limits the Philippine government's emergency options to a far greater extent than those in place in Malaysia, Singapore and elsewhere in Asia.

The president is constitutionally empowered to declare a state of emergency "and under reasonable terms... temporarily take over or direct the operations of any privately owned public utility or business affected by the public interest."

No other powers were cited in the constitution.



A house sits precariously in the mud as children play in the coastal town of Bislig, Philippines after an earthquake. (Reuter wirephoto)

Aftershocks jolt Mindanao

Dike destroyed, houses wrecked by raging waters

MANILA, Dec 17, (Agencies): Some 30 aftershocks have been recorded since a major earthquake struck the southern Philippines, killing at least one person and injuring five people, authorities said today.

The Philippine Volcanology Commission said the 30 aftershocks were recorded in Mindanao island, 500 miles (800 km) south of Manila, which was hit by the tremor with a magnitude of 7.3 on the Richter scale before dawn yesterday.

The aftershocks ranged in intensity from one to five.

Yesterday's tremor was centred in the Pacific Ocean about 40 miles (65 km) east of the logging town of Bislig in Mindanao's Surigao del Sur province.

Relief officials said a boy was pinned to death in the crush of a house in Bislig.

The military Office of Civil Defence (OCD) said three tunnel workers in the mining town of Tagum were injured by falling rocks. Two other injuries were reported earlier in the collapse of a building in Bislig and a shanty in the port city of Davao.

Relief officials said at least 35 wooden, palm- and concrete houses in Mindanao were destroyed in the quake, rendering 200 people homeless.

The quake lasted 40 seconds and was felt throughout Mindanao and as far north as Legazpi City, 640 kms (400 miles) away, said Ramundo Punongbayan, director of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology.

The OCD said 23 houses were wrecked by raging waters which flowed out of a river dike that was destroyed by the quake in the town of Tagu in Surigao del Sur province.

Residents had been warned and moved to safer ground before the dike collapsed, OCD staffer Hermie Suarez said.

Eleven houses in the town of Bislig, south of Tagu, were also destroyed by the quake, Ms Suarez said.

She said falling rocks injured three mines working in a makeshift tunnel in a remote mountain village in the province of Davao del Norte, about 960 kms (600 miles) southeast of Manila.

The earthquake struck sparsely populated areas, Punongbayan said yesterday.

There were reports of widespread power outages in Mindanao, and several aftershocks of weaker intensity were felt in Bislig, Punongbayan said.

Radio station DZXL in Manila said residents, fearful of tidal waves, fled their homes for higher ground when the tremor was felt at 2:44 am (1844 GMT Friday).

Punongbayan said the epicentre of the earthquake was 49 kms (31 miles) below the Pacific's Philippine trench, causing it to swallow the sea, but there were no reports of tidal waves.

It was the biggest earthquake in that area since a quake registering 6.8 struck Nov 7, 1976, causing minor damage.

In August 1976, a quake measuring 7.9 struck near the southwestern coast of Min-

danao, causing a tidal wave that killed an estimated 8,000 people. A magnitude 7.1 earthquake in the western part of Mindanao the next day caused some injuries and damage.

The Richter scale of magnitude is a gauge of the total energy released by an earthquake, and each increase of one number means the ground motion is 10 times greater.

Other villagers repaired damaged homes as holiday decorations fluttered in the wind and Christmas songs blared from transistor radios.

Mayor Paterino Guasa of Bislig, a town of 131,000 people in Surigao del Sur Province, was roused from sleep when his house shook violently.

"People rushed out into the streets screaming in fear," he said.

"I heard soldiers firing in the air as our barracks shook and the ceiling fan fell down," Police Lieutenant Danilo Posadas said. "They always do that during emergencies at night to wake people up."

Hundreds of people living in houses built on stilts along the coast fled their homes.

"We ran out of our home because it was swaying back and forth and we were afraid it might fall down," said Narda Cruz, 54, a mother of four.

"All the people in Bislig ran outside," said Red Cross worker Susan Gran.

She said the brevity of the 30-second tremor and the fact that few people dwelled in the worst-hit mountainous areas "kept the number of casualties low."

Sources point at ex-palace guard

Another coup cooking

MANILA, (Reuter): The former deputy commander of President Corazon Aquino's own palace guard is leading what intelligence officials say is a new phase in a plan by rightist officers to topple her government.

Fears of new action by army rebels, this time on the southern island of Mindanao where a quarter of the country's armed forces are deployed, have prompted the government to rush military reinforcements to the southern city of Davao.

Political and intelligence sources said the rebels had intended to seize the Central Bank building in Davao at the start of a general uprising in Mindanao that would lead to the creation of a separate state there.

Aquino's intelligence chief Rodolfo Canieso described the new phase in the rebel operation as "a political move below the level of coup d'etat" by some separatist political groups with the backing of rebel military forces in the region.

Brigadier General Guillermo Flores, the Mindanao military commander, believes prompt action to reinforce Davao and other key centres has thwarted the rebel plans, but tension remains high.

Troops loyal to Aquino this month defeated the sixth and the most serious attempt to remove her in the almost four years since she was swept to power in a popular revolt in 1986.

But one of the rightwing rebel leaders, cashiered Colonel Gregorio "Gringo" Honasan, has warned that they will try again, accusing Aquino of tolerating corruption, being a weak leader, soft on communism and failing to provide direction to the country of 60 million people.

Canieso said that in any future coup, two thirds of the armed forces would probably stay neutral, joining whichever side won.

The military has identified the leader of the reported new phase of the coup plan as Colonel Alexander Noble, the former chief-of-staff of Aquino's presidential security group.

Last year he was assigned to lead an army battalion in the mountainous interior of Mindanao, and then six months ago detailed to head a special task force to help organise minority tribes in Mindanao as self-defence units against communist guerrillas.

Noble was captured during the rebel coup attempt this month in the central region of

Samar, but later escaped.

He is believed to have linked up with local Mindanao tribesmen and some units of elite Scout Ranger commandos in the Mindanao province of Agusan del Sur, military sources at regional headquarters in Zamboanga said by telephone.

Annoyed by Canieso's revelations, Armed Forces chief General Renato de Villa stated categorically on Saturday: "The coup is finished."

He said troop movements were to reassure the 14 million population of Mindanao was in the government control.

Mindanao, mountainous and rich in natural resources, has long been the Achilles' heel of the Philippines, with separatist Muslim rebels launching a full-scale war there in the 1970s in which more than 50,000 people were killed.

The government held a referendum in about half of Mindanao last month on its proposals for limited autonomy. The proposals were thrown out by most of the population, with only four poor Muslim areas voting in favour.

If the phased coup theory is correct, the idea may be to tie up more troops in the southern Philippines ahead of fresh attacks in Manila and the northern island of Luzon, Western military analysts said.

De Villa has stepped up security in Manila following a grenade attack against a US embassy housing complex in Manila on Thursday.

De Villa said it was difficult to prevent "isolated cases of terrorism" but he said troops had been placed around the perimeter of Manila to block movement by any rebel units towards the capital.

Aquino has accused national political opposition leaders of being behind the attempt to unseat her, and military chiefs say large of money were offered to rebel commanders to join the coup.

Almost unanimously, Aquino's intelligence, defence and security chiefs have warned of another coup attempt within six months unless Aquino attempts to tackle some of the root causes of rebellion.

Aquino has said she will not be rushed into making political changes or revamping her cabinet, but in the meantime the country remains awash with speculation that the rebels will strike again.

Filipinos hail tough general

The man who foiled sixth coup attempt

MANILA, (Reuter): Filipinos are hailing a beggar's son, who grew up in the slums of Manila and once worked as a shoeshine boy, as the man who saved their country from this month's coup attempt.

Brigadier-General Rodolfo Biazon led loyal troops in the capital against some of the 3,000 rebel soldiers who tried to overthrow the government of President Corazon Aquino.

As howitzer shells fired by rebel soldiers rained down around him, the 34-year-old former marine commander stood inside the military headquarters at Camp Aguinaldo, barking orders to his men through a white-and-orange loudspeaker.

His men foiled the mutineers' attempts to take Aguinaldo and the revolt, the sixth coup attempt in almost four years, later collapsed.

Biazon has been tipped as the next chief-of-staff of the armed forces following the crushing of the revolt, in which 119 were killed and nearly 600 wounded.

The mutiny effectively ended on December 7 when rebel soldiers gave up their fight.

Filipinos on the street call him a hero. Film studios want to make a movie about him. The media are ecstatic.

"Women are falling for him. He's perceived to have the right mix of the right stuff," wrote Letty Jimenez-Magsanoc, a columnist with the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

"Tough professional but all heart."

Grace under fire. Stern but understanding father to the rebellious mutineers. Duty above sentiments," she wrote.

The Manila Chronicle said someone should make a statue of him and offered this description of the man.

"Six feet of lean, camouflage-clad, athletic flesh and sinew — neither muscular bulk nor spare ounces are apparent — towering upward, ramrod-straight to a chiseled face topped by a steel-gray crewcut."

The tough, battle-proven soldier shies away from the media in a nation where many army leaders crave the limelight and appear regularly on television chat shows.

During the fighting in Manila that began on December 1, Filipinos heard senior military officials several times triumphantly declared victory over the rebels, only to watch as the battle raged on for a week.

Biazon, who heads the National Capital Regional Defence Command, said he found little reason to rejoice.

During a news conference in the middle of the fighting, he had to choke back tears while his senior officers proudly proclaimed government troops had won.

He later described how hard it had been to launch attacks on rebel marines fighting to take Aguinaldo.

"Many of those guys who got killed at the gate, I knew their nicknames because they were my men before," he told the Inquirer on



Biazon: saviour

December 12. "This thing hurts the armed forces."

But he said: "a soldier must always be prepared to make painful decisions and carry out painful actions."

He said many enlisted men who joined the revolt had been paid by unidentified groups and lied to by their officers about what they were about to do.

He said a few months' extra pay could help shift loyalties among soldiers who came from the poorest class.

"We come from the generally

lower social strata, sons of farmers, peasants, labourers. Only a very few would consider coming from the families of the elite of society."

Biazon understands his men. He was born in the remote northern town of Banaue, in Ilocos Norte province, the son of an illiterate beggar and a laundry woman.

Growing up in Manila, he worked as a shoeshine boy for American soldiers during World War Two, and then as a cigarette vendor, construction worker and laundryman.

He wanted to be a teacher, but graduated instead from the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) in 1961.

In the 1970s Biazon gained extensive combat experience on the southern island of Mindanao fighting against Muslim separatists. More than 50,000 people were killed during the years of fighting.

He went on to become superintendent of PMA and marine commander. He is scheduled to retire in April 1991.

Biazon emerged from the six-day coup attempt hoarse and haggard-looking, and said he was unashamed of having showed emotion over the deaths of both loyal and rebel troops.

"No one has the right to prevent me from feeling like a human being," he said. "But what I can tell you is this, should there be any other moment to make the same painful decision, I will do it, because I recognise my duty as a soldier."

Media play wild and free-wheeling role during coup bid

MANILA, Philippines, (AP): During the recent coup attempt, one Manila radio station warned government soldiers where rebels snipers were hiding.

Another, backing supporters of the late deposed president Ferdinand E. Marcos, reported erroneously that President Corazon Aquino had fled the presidential palace.

One reporter was on the air when a shell landed nearby.

"I'm hit," she screamed. She continued broadcasting as her van rushed her to a hospital, where doctors found she was suffering from shock.

Such was the wild and free-wheeling style of reporting by some Manila radio stations during the bloody coup attempt, which began on Dec 1 and ended eight days later.

Most Filipinos followed the rebellion

through live, round-the-clock coverage over radio, the major medium of news and information for most of the country.

Differences in reporting style sometimes showed the bias of individual stations.

Reporters and anchormen for DZMM rebuked colleagues from rival stations for airing "tactical information," such as positions of government forces and the types of firearms and vehicles used.

"You are traitors to our country," a reporter lectured on the air.

As tension mounted, the government warned it would strictly enforce existing guidelines that gave it the authority to close stations that air hostile propaganda or "disinformation."

There is no such government authority over newspapers, and publishers said they received

no directives from the government on what to print. But some individual reporters claimed they were lectured by military and civilian officials angry at stories perceived as favourable to the rebels.

The National Telecommunications Commission closed Manila radio station DZEC after it reported erroneously that Aquino fled the palace at the height of the coup attempt.

The commission also shut down Cebu radio station DYLA after it aired a taped interview with a rebel leader, Brig. Gen. Edgardo Abenina. A week later, the commission reopened the station at the request of church leaders.

So far, the government has issued no formal warnings against other stations. It did not prevent them from interviewing rebels after they gave up strongholds in the financial district of Makati on Dec 7, despite the "ban"

of rebel propaganda.

Stations that adopted a more balanced editorial policy faced another problem: fending off threats from both government officials and the rebels.

Officials of private radio station DZRH said they tried to broadcast both government and rebel statements. But they stopped airing rebel manifestos after verbal threats by officials to close the station.

Nolan Sison, DZRH's managing editor, said the staff received frequent calls from Defence Secretary Fidel Ramos and military officials demanding that the station omit detailed reports of rebel attacks on military camps.

At one point Brig. Gen. Oscar Florendo, chief of the military civil-relations office, complained that such detailed reporting was

helping rebel soldiers correct their aim during air and artillery attacks at the armed forces headquarters at Camp Aguinaldo.

Aside from government warnings, stations also received threats from mutineers who demanded that they air only rebel material.

One reporter, who asked that his name and station not be mentioned, said rebels threatened him after management refused to broadcast his interview with them.

"We got threats from all kinds of people almost every day," Sison said. "We tried to balance our reporting, and the threats from both sides made us think we did have a balanced programming."

Television stations reacted more cautiously. All but one of the five Manila stations, including the government station, went off the air on the first day of the coup.

Technicians at the four stations removed essential transmitter parts to prevent rebel soldiers from seizing their facilities and making telecasts.

In 1987, rebel forces loyal to Marcos, who was ousted in 1986, took over private radio and television station GMA-7 and broadcast statements.

As the coup attempt unfolded, stations exercised a degree of self-censorship by bowing to the government demands that they avoid detailed reports of tactical operations.

For example, several continued broadcasting reports of shelling at Camp Aguinaldo and elsewhere but would not state precisely where the rounds were falling. Stations still reported movements of government forces, but without detailing exactly how many troops were deployed.

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BUSINESS & FINANCE

Consumers may have to pay more for energy in the '90s

Opec does not want to push very high prices: Iran

LONDON, Dec 17, (Reuters). Consumers should be ready to pay more for energy in the 1990s, industry experts say.

They don't altogether rule out another oil price 'shock' like the ones that jolted the world economy in 1973 and 1979.

And governments may eventually levy new taxes to make people burn less gas, oil and coal if ecologists win the argument that carbon dioxide and other emissions from these fossil fuels really do threaten a disastrous global warming.

On the other hand, where energy is concerned, any predictions require a big dose of scepticism.

At the start of the 1980s, for instance, there were forecasts that the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (Opec) might by decade's end have got the oil price up to \$100 per barrel. The

world average spot price now is around \$18.

Sheikh Ahmed Zaki Yamani, then Saudi Arabia's petroleum minister, was among a few who challenged the conventional wisdom.

High prices stamped the West into conservation and into a quest for its own oil from areas like Alaska and the North Sea.

Now technology, the 'green' lobby and volatility in Eastern Europe and the Middle East are the jokers in the energy pack.

Prevailing conventional wisdom is that, at least in the short term, oil will stay the world's prime fuel, accounting for about 40 per cent of all energy used, and therefore remain a price pacemaker.

Oil demand is now back where it was before the glut, and still rebounding. US and Soviet output is falling. Many other producers in and out of Opec are

pumping at or near capacity.

So, industry leaders say, most extra oil needed must come from a few big Middle East Gulf sellers such as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Iraq and Iran.

Emerging in Opec as an organisation within an organisation, they control two-thirds of world reserves.

The Gulf producers insist that, this time around, they will never hold consumers to ransom.

"Opec does not want to push very high prices," says Oil Minister Gholamreza Aqazadeh of Iran. His country used to be Opec's leading pricing militant.

Saudi Arabia's Hisham Nazer says Opec has learned that "too high a price merely sets the stage for too low a price."

Events, however, have had a habit of overwhelming Opec.

The price raced p to \$40 a barrel a decade ago — not because Opec decreed it but because consumers, led by Japan, went on a panic buying spree to build up stocks. They feared that Iran's 1979 revolution would spread through the Gulf.

Some experts also wonder where Opec nations will find the money to restore their capacity to produce extra oil, much of which "rusted in" when it was left idle in the glut.

Iraqi Fadhil Al Chalabi, a former Opec deputy secretary general, says most may need Western credits or other help.

He puts current Opec capacity at 25 to 26 million barrels per day (BPD). Production is already 23 million and rising.

Upheaval in Eastern Europe and Soviet "perestroika" economic reforms meanwhile may augment the

demand for Middle East oil.

The Soviet Union, the biggest petroleum producer, made nonsense in the 1980s of US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) warnings that its output would drop. In 1988 it hit a record 12.6 million — albeit achieved only at a prohibitive cost.

"Approximately one out of every seven roubles invested in the country's industry in 1981-1985 went to the extraction of oil," says Alexander Arbatov, a Soviet energy adviser.

The Soviet Union, he argues, now has no option but to cut production and this is likely to mean a decline in exports.

One Opec scenario sees Western cash revamping the economies of East Europe and inevitably firing up oil demand there. If Soviet oil is not available, demand would go to Opec.

Technology and a world-wide

environmentalist campaign could play either way for Opec.

Under 'green' pressure, technology might achieve practical nuclear fusion or develop cars using appreciably less petrol.

Highly efficient, natural gas-fired power stations are a more immediate prospect. New techniques can also win more oil from declining non-Opec fields.

But technology can also deliver spectacular failures.

The present, fission-based nuclear industry might find public opinion decisively against it after any new accident on the scale of the Soviet Chernobyl reactor disaster in 1986.

Opec was this year helped partly by technical failure.

A gas blast on a North Sea pumping platform temporarily took about 500,000 BPD of oil off the market.

China to reassure private sector

BEIJING, Dec 17, (Reuters). China today tried to reassure its nervous private sector that the Communist Party was not trying to put it out of business.

But Chinese entrepreneurs and Western diplomats said the party, which has come under the control of hardliners since reformist leaders were ousted in June, would have great difficulty in convincing a sceptical public.

Economic information, in a front-page article entitled "Do not worry," said China's private sector had contributed to development since economic reforms began in 1978, and would be allowed to continue.

"Recently there have been many rumours that the government would restrict private entrepreneurs and the growth of the private sector, or that private businessmen would be treated as capitalists," the newspaper said.

"There is no truth to these rumours."

But China's post-June leaders have given conflicting signals on their plans for the economy and the fate of the private sector, which remains small.

Communist Party chief Jiang Zemin has said the private sector has a role to play in China's economic development.

But the official media have hailed state businesses, until June widely ridiculed as inefficient, as models of socialist modernisation.

Beijing has recently tried to channel credit and raw materials to 'state' companies, reducing supplies to private and collective businesses. The media have published numerous articles denouncing private entrepreneurs as tax evaders, and in Beijing businessmen have been barred from joining the party.

The People's Daily has even implied that American economist Milton Friedman, a renowned advocate of free market policies, was partly responsible for 'pro-democracy' under 'that' was crushed by the party in June.

Western diplomats said Beijing was being forced to undo the damage its own policy statements had inflicted on its credibility since the ousting of reformist Communist Party chief Zhao Ziyang in June.

"The expectations under Zhao Ziyang that the private sector would expand are gone," said a diplomat.

"People are concerned and the government is not having an easy time trying to convince them," he said.

"It's getting harder and harder to stay in business," said a fruit vendor, looking over a row of empty stalls nearby.

Smoking ban dropped

THE County Council in Vasterbotten, Sweden, has reversed its decision banning smoking in all its hospital and health care premises.

Instead of abolishing smoking rooms the County Council has adopted a softer line, substituting "should" for "shall" eliminate smoking rooms.

And a ban on the use of oral snuff has been lifted.

The decision to drop the smoking room ban has been warmly welcomed by Smokepeace, the Swedish group which promotes smokers rights and tolerance between smokers and non-smokers.

Elof Soderberg, group leader of the Christian Democratic Party on the County Council said: "We have adopted a more realistic stance."

Computer firm bounces back

BEIJING, Dec 17, (Reuters). Stone Corporation, once hailed as China's most dynamic computer company, is struggling back from the ousting of its disident president and its links to the summer's political unrest.

A senior official, in his first interview with foreign reporters since company staff supported a democracy campaign crushed by the army in June, said today that Stone now enjoyed Beijing's support and would not be taken over.

"We are operating normally. We have the government's support," said president Shen Guojun. "The mistakes of an individual are not those of the company."

The individual he meant was Wan Runnan, one of four engineers who set up Stone in 1984 and served as its president until he fled China after the June crackdown.

Opec urged to stick to output agreement

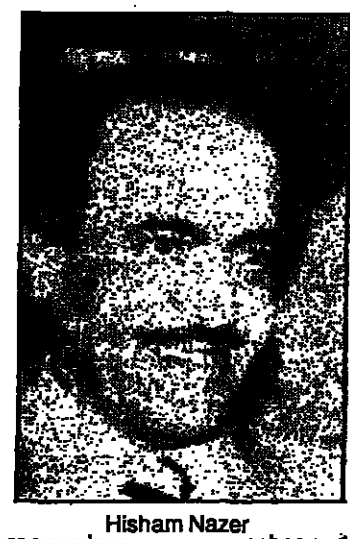
NICOSIA, Dec 17, (Reuters). King Fahd of Saudi Arabia yesterday urged Opec states to stick to a recent pact aimed at stabilising oil prices that sets a production ceiling of around 22.1 million barrels a day (BPD).

The Saudi Press Agency (SPA) said King Fahd welcomed the Nov 28 agreement reached by the 13-member Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries.

SPA said the Saudi monarch, who was chairing a cabinet meeting, heard a report from Oil Minister Hisham Nazer on the current state of the market and prices.

He stressed the need to abide by the agreement and directed Minister Nazer to continue implementing the present petroleum policy, which has led to a noticeable balance between supply and demand in the petroleum market," SPA quoted Information Minister Ali Al Shaer as saying.

Opec's oil ministers increased the group's overall output share from 20.5 million BPD to 22.1



Hisham Nazer

million BPD from Jan 1 to defend oil prices at a "minimum reference" level of \$18 a barrel.

Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia, the world's largest oil producer, wants to start oil refining and distribution in Japan, a move which may force reorganization of Japan's oil industry, the leading economic journal Nihon Keizai Shimbun reported today.

The paper said Saudi Arabia has already sounded out the Ministry of International Trade and Industry and the resources and energy agency of the possibility.

The Japanese government is ready to co-operate with Saudi Arabia on conditions that the Gulf nation will allow Japanese oil developers to participate oil development projects in the country, secure stable crude supply in case of oil crisis and contribute to structural improvement of the Japanese oil industry, the paper said.

Massashi Yamamoto, director of the Resources and Energy Agency, will visit Saudi Arabia in January to prepare for high-level negotiations on the project in March, the daily said.

It said Saudi Arabia is strongly interested in steady growth of oil demand in Japan and wants to establish a government-financed oil refining and distribution to compete against major US and

European oil firms.

Saudi's direct entry into the Japanese market may intensify competition and trigger reorganization of the domestic industry, the daily said.

The timing and scale of the Saudi project are not known, but it will take at least two to three years to come through, the paper said.

In another development Iran will export about 1 million barrels of oil and 1 billion cubic metres of natural gas a year to Romania under an agreement signed in Tehran today on the eve of a visit by President Nicolae Ceausescu, Tehran radio reported.

The state-run radio, monitored in Nicosia, said the agreement was concluded at a meeting between Iranian Oil Minister Gholamreza Aqazadeh and visiting Romanian Deputy Prime Minister Ion Radu.

The radio did not say when the exports would begin, but quoted Aqazadeh as saying that the gas exports could increase later.

Hungary seeks UK aid

Jobless rate down

LONDON, Dec 17, (UPI). Hungarian Prime Minister Miklos Nemeth sought British aid yesterday to help his country overcome growing economic problems.

Nemeth's schedule, shortened from a three-day visit to 12 hours so he could return home for critical budget talks, includes meetings with Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, Chancellor of Exchequer John Major, Deputy Prime Minister Geoffrey Howe and Opposition Labour Party leader Neil Kinnock.

"Sweetness and light will prevail" at the meetings, a British official said.

Among the subjects to be discussed are the wave of democracy movements sweeping Eastern Europe, bilateral and European Economic Community assistance to help Hungary switch from a planned to a market economy, and an easing of restrictions that ban exports of high technology to Warsaw Pact countries.

Nemeth had to curtail his visit because emergency negotiations with independent political parties and trade unions over the budget require his presence at home, a Hungarian official said.

The Hungarian Parliament is scheduled to vote Dec 18 on an austerity budget, including measures to reduce the balance of payments, deficits and state

subsidiaries, in line with conditions set by the International Monetary Fund for releasing \$350 million credit.

"He wants to be there to argue about the budget," the Hungarian said. "It's a very large obstacle."

British Foreign Office officials said relations with Hungary have been good because of its commitment to economic and political reform, which has been less dramatic but more profound than in other Eastern European countries.

Nemeth, 41 and a former Harvard student, spent the weekend trying to persuade parliamentary committees and trade unions to accept the proposed budget, which is expected to raise food prices, increase unemployment and force some state-owned firms into bankruptcy.

Britain's unemployment rate fell to 5.8 per cent in November from 5.9 per cent in the previous month, its lowest level since the autumn of 1980, the government said today.

The jobless rate has been falling for 40 months.

The seasonally adjusted rate stood at 7.5 per cent in November 1988, the Department of Employment said.

The number of jobless fell by 25,200 in November.

Japanese electronics firms to boost imports

TOKYO, Dec 17, (AP). In the face of sharp criticism from overseas of Japan's huge trade surplus, three major electronics firms said today they are planning to import more foreign-made semiconductors, parts and finished products over the next few years.

Toshiba Corp., Matsushita Electric Industrial Co. and Mitsubishi Electric Corp. plan to boost such imports to help ease trade friction, officials of the three companies said.

Toshiba will increase semiconductor imports from its current 18.5 per cent to around 20 per cent, while Matsushita plans "at least" to double its imports, officials said.

Foreign chipmakers have criticised Japan for excluding their products from its semiconductor market and demanded greater access.

Toshiba will freeze the company's exports to lower than their 1988 level of \$96.2 billion yen (\$62.23 billion) by 1993, while doubling the amount of imports in 1988 — some 100 billion yen (\$69 million) — over the same period, said Toshiba spokesman Akira Ohashi.

Toshiba will also double production of its subsidiaries in the United States, Europe and Southeast Asia, whose products will be imported back to Japan, Ohashi said. Among them are lap-top computers made in West Germany, colour television pic-

ture tubes and air-conditioners made in Thailand, and video cassette recorders made in Singapore.

According to Matsushita's estimates, the company's imports during fiscal 1989, which ends next March, will amount to 274.6 billion yen (\$1.9 billion), while exports will be 1.38 trillion yen (\$9.6 billion), or a \$7.7 billion surplus.

"By increasing imports, we can show the world that we're actually making efforts to reduce trade imbalances, so it's very important," said Akira Kitazawa, a Matsushita spokesman. "Of course it will help reduce US-Japan trade frictions, too."

Matsushita and its 12 subsidiaries decided recently to increase by 1991 its use of imported materials, such as steel panels, from the current 7 per cent to 10 per cent for Matsushita products as part of an "action plan for international co-operation" started this year, Kitazawa said.

Imports by Matsushita Electric in 1988 rose to 103.2 billion yen (\$731 million), 2.6 times more than the 1985 figure, following recommendations of an in-house import promotion committee four years ago, said Mitsubishi spokesman Takashi Fujii.

Initially, Mitsubishi will gradually increase imports from its own subsidiaries, he said.

The Ministry of International

Trade and Industry welcomed the companies' moves but called for further efforts by Japan's private sector to narrow discrepancies between exports and imports.

A Miti official, speaking on condition of anonymity, ruled out the possibility of government "guidance" — tantamount to orders — to individual firms to boost imports.

Meanwhile, International Trade Minister Hikaru Matsunaga said today he has not yet decided whether to extend or remove Japan's voluntary automobile exports to the United States in fiscal 1990, starting April 1.

"I will make up my mind in the near future after reviewing various factors," Matsunaga told reporters after yesterday's cabinet session.

Matsunaga, head of the Ministry of International Trade and Industry which oversees Japan's foreign trade, is scheduled to visit Washington for talks with Bush administration officials in January.

Riyadh to spend \$300m on offshore oilfield

NEW YORK, Dec 17, (UPI). Saudi Arabia, the largest producer of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries, will spend \$300 million to upgrade an offshore oilfield as part of an effort to raise production capacity by 25 per cent news agency said today.

Quoting the Lloyds List in London, the agency said the Saudi Aramco Oil Company has called for offers to expand the Safaniya oilfield close to its border with Kuwait.

The work would involve construction of a fourth heating oil separation plant, which would have a crude processing capacity of 300,000 barrels a day.

Although Saudi Arabia currently has facilities to export 14 million barrels a day of crude, its production capacity is believed to be around 8 million barrels daily.

In September, Saudi Oil Minister Hisham Nazer said in a Washington interview with the oil daily that the kingdom planned to raise its capacity to 10 million barrels a day.

Saudi Arabia, which earlier this year bought a 50 per cent interest in three Texaco Inc. refineries and 10,000 service stations in the eastern United States, plans to refine and sell petroleum products world-wide, Nazer said.

British pay still rising

LONDON, Dec 17, (Reuters). Average earnings in Britain rose by 9.25 per cent in the year to October and a government minister said higher wages could make British products too expensive abroad and threaten employment at home.

"Moderation in pay remains a key requirement if we are to remain competitive in world markets and not put next year's employment prospects at risk," Employment Secretary Norman Fowler said after official figures were released yesterday.

Unemployment fell a provisional, seasonally adjusted 25,200 in November to 1.65 million, or 5.8 per cent of the workforce, down from 5.9 per cent in October.

It was the lowest level of unemployment in nine years and the number of jobless has now declined for 40 consecutive months.

But in a blow to the government's battle against inflation, average earnings rose by 9.25 per cent in the year to October after nine per cent in the year ended in September. The annual rate was 8.75 per cent in June, July and August.

US trade policies come under scrutiny

GENEVA, Dec 17, (AP). The United States has increased protection of some domestic industries and introduced greater import restraints while pressing for more liberal international trade, the world trade negotiating body said yesterday.

A report by the secretariat of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade said even though the United States has low tariffs and trade barriers in most sectors, large trade and current account deficits had increased pressure for more restrictions against imports.

The report highlighted the concerns of many countries over apparent US trend towards bypassing internationally agreed GATT procedures and restoring to unilateral and bilateral measures to promote its trade interests.

The GATT secretariat report formed part of the first evaluation of US policy to be carried out under a new trade policy review mechanism agreed on by ministers in Montreal last December.

In a separate report submitted to the GATT council in Geneva as part of the same evaluation, the US government said its trade policy was aimed at reducing trade distortions and barriers, both in the United States and abroad, to allow market forces to operate and boost trade expansion.

"We are totally committed to... an open and fair trade policy," Rufus Yerxa, US ambassador to GATT, told the council meeting.

"Those who believe the United States can solve its trade or economic problems by erecting high trade barriers... are living in the age of the dinosaur," he said.

Yerxa said he regarded the GATT secretariat report as "generally fair," commenting that such an evaluation of trade policy was bound to be critical in parts.

A text of his speech was made available to journalists.

A trade source who attended the closed council session said the meeting was "evenly balanced" between criticism and praise for US trade policy.

Some delegates told the meeting they recognised the US economy was very open and that it was the largest market for exports from many areas, including developing countries, the source said on condition of anonymity.

Other participants commented the "relatively few" import restrictions and subsidies outside agriculture, he added.

On agriculture, some delegates called for a phasing out of 30-year-old import restrictions. They pointed out that subsidies under US farm legislation were costly for the US economy and affected third countries' export markets, the source said.

The US government report said "US firms were adversely affected by barriers" in more than 34 countries and two regional trading blocs, the European Economic Community and the Gulf Co-operation Council.

It said Washington's top priority was for agreement next December on more comprehensive rules to liberalise world trade as a result of the current four-year Uruguay round of negotiations.

Aerospace profits Decline expected

WASHINGTON, Dec 17, (UPI). Defence spending cuts are expected to trim aerospace industry profits by 13 per cent this year, although sales and exports are anticipated at record levels, the Aerospace Industries Association said Wednesday.

Don Fuqua, president of the association, said the affects of several years of reduced defence spending are beginning to show on the bottom lines of most aerospace companies.

Industry profits are forecast to slip to \$4.3 billion this year from \$4.9 billion the year before.

Spending for military aircraft is expected to post a decline this year and next, while increases are anticipated in missile and space system expenditures, he said.

This year's aerospace sales, however, are projected to top \$120 billion, up five per cent from last year, with another increase forecast for next year, the association said.

The profit decline, the second in the past four years, was attributed to lower military production rates, losses under fixed price development contracts and more competitive pricing on commercial aircraft.

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Casablanca needs more liberalisation, says banker

CASABLANCA, Morocco, Dec 17, (Reuters). Morocco, one of the most liberal economies in the Arab world, is in the middle of a heated debate over plans to privatise more than 100 profitable state-run enterprises.

The arguments for and against go to the heart of how this traditional North African monarchy is governed and could bring about the most far-reaching political changes since the country regained independence in 1956.

King Hassan is on record as saying he wants to decentralise the decision-making process, giving more political power to regional authorities and creating a more federal-style system.

For this to be a success, matching economic power centres must also be created.

Supporters say privatisation would provide the means to do this, breaking up the current concentration of wealth around the central axis of Rabat and Casablanca, the political and commercial capitals.

Critics say this is wishful thinking in a country without a sophisticated banking system and stock exchange mechanism, and say they see little real desire to lessen central control.

Instead, they argue, some 2,000 wealthy families grouped around the Royal Palace will be the only ones to benefit as they have the money to buy privatised companies.

"I do not believe we are talking about real power being devolved, one independent analyst said. Through patronage and favour the Moroccan monarchy has progressively increased its power. Why suddenly reverse the process?"

Raising the spectre of the rich plundering the nation's coffers, opposition economists say there is no evidence that privatisation would spur economic growth needed to meet the challenges of the 1990s.

"Will privatisation spur economic development or will it lead to the pauperisation of the 'have nots' and the enrichment of the wealthy?" asked Mohammed Alami of the newly-founded Maghreb Unionist Party.

It is common with all North Africa, Morocco has a rapidly growing population and faces a major problem trying to find jobs for tens of thousands of young people each year.

"This country needs economic growth. In my opinion what we need is more liberalisation. One must be careful not to confuse liberalisation with privatisation," said a director of one of the country's largest private banks.

King Hassan, who says he wants to build a "people's capitalism," is closely associated with the plan.

In November, he appointed Economic Minister Moulay Zine Zahidi to supervise the scheme, giving him strict instructions that it should be carried out in the interests of all Moroccans.

"What we want is that wealth, instead of being kept and monopolised by certain sectors, can benefit all regions of Morocco," the King told him.

Addressing another widely-expressed fear, the King said the state must not offload on the public inefficient industries on the point of collapse or running at a loss.

"We will privatise only sectors in profit," he said.

KD deposit rates steady

KUWAIT, Dec 17, (Reuters). Kuwaiti dinar interbank deposits remained steady today, with trade slowing to a virtual halt due to the approaching turn of the year and the European weekend.

Dealers say most banks had balanced their books for the remainder of the month and were reluctant to take out fresh positions.

Overnight funds dealt at 8-1/4 per cent but the rest of the short rates were quiet. All rates up to the three months were quoted unchanged at 8-1/2, 1-1/4, 5-1/2, 6-1/2, 7-1/2, 8-1/2, 9-1/2, 10-1/2, 11-1/2, 12-1/2, 13-1/2, 14-1/2, 15-1/2, 16-1/2, 17-1/2, 18-1/2, 19-1/2, 20-1/2, 21-1/2, 22-1/2, 23-1/2, 24-1/2, 25-1/2, 26-1/2, 27-1/2, 28-1/2, 29-1/2, 30-1/2, 31-1/2, 32-1/2, 33-1/2, 34-1/2, 35-1/2, 36-1/2, 37-1/2, 38-1/2, 39-1/2, 40-1/2, 41-1/2, 42-1/2, 43-1/2, 44-1/2, 45-1/2, 46-1/2, 47-1/2, 48-1/2, 49-1/2, 50-1/2, 51-1/2, 52-1/2, 53-1/2, 54-1/2, 55-1/2, 56-1/2, 57-1/2, 58-1/2, 59-1/2, 60-1/2, 61-1/2, 62-1/2, 63-1/2, 64-1/2, 65-1/2, 66-1/2, 67-1/2, 68-1/2, 69-1/2, 70-1/2, 71-1/2, 72-1/2, 73-1/2, 74-1/2, 75-1/2, 76-1/2, 77-1/2, 78-1/2, 79-1/2, 80-1/2, 81-1/2, 82-1/2, 83-1/2, 84-1/2, 85-1/2, 86-1/2, 87-1/2, 88-1/2, 89-1/2, 90-1/2, 91-1/2, 92-1/2, 93-1/2, 94-1/2, 95-1/2, 96-1/2, 97-1/2, 98-1/2, 99-1/2, 100-1/2, 101-1/2, 102-1/2, 103-1/2, 104-1/2, 105-1/2, 106-1/2, 107-1/2, 108-1/2, 109-1/2, 110-1/2, 111-1/2, 112-1/2, 113-1/2, 114-1/2, 115-1/2, 116-1/2, 117-1/2, 118-1/2, 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EVENTS

Paintings that each tell a story

ZAINAB AL FOZAN became an artist out of necessity. Although skilled at drawing when she was a student Zainab, who hails from Assam in India and came to Kuwait more than 20 years ago, never explored her talent until doctors, who treated her from an ailment in 1980, suggested she take up a hobby. She became a prolific self-taught artist producing hundreds of landscapes and still life and abstract works. Most of these are now in Bremen, West Germany where she began painting and where she plans to hold an exhibition next year.

This will be her first show outside Kuwait. Here she has exhibited in Dahiyat Abdulla Salem Gallery.

Her works fall in two different categories. Landscapes of Kuwait and that of her native Shillong, and still life oils form part of a collection that bears a folkloric touch, such as Sadu weaving designs or scenes of women digging clay in her hometown.

Rather intriguing and ambitious are her abstract oils that reflect the artist's intense thoughts and feelings. Bearing titles such as *Words, Humiliation, Feelings, The Opposite*

World, Disease, and Hypocrisy these works question, if not condemn, some of the social and personal values she has observed.

For example, the work named *Disease*, in part resembles a virus written on a glass plate under the microscope. But in fact Zainab had in mind the disease of society that, in her view, has become overrun by materialism, envy and hypocrisy, an irreversible tide depicted in thick and circular strokes of reddish and blue paint.

Circumstances is another simple-looking painting with a complex idea behind it. It depicts a bridge with a vicious shark on the one end and sunshine on the other. The bridge is the symbol of the unavoidable, the sunshine of the desirable, the shark of the fear of unknown, explains Zainab.

Zainab's abstract works are pregnant with messages, some of which are self-evident. But even some of her pastoral scenes have a story to tell. A painting entitled *Ungrateful* shows a deer which fed on the leaves of a bush that had protected it from a stalking hunter.

Zainab has a note book in which she has recorded the story



behind every one of her paintings. As she jots down the thoughts and feelings that have inspired her she discovers that her words complement, even compete with, the brush strokes in communicating a wide range of ideas she needs to share with the world around her. (J.P.)

WHAT'S ON

ARTS

Seminar
THERE will be a seminar at the DAA on "Arabic & European Art in the Light of Symbolism" December 10, 1989 - January 10, 1990. Sunday and Tuesday 11.00 - 12.30 am. Anyone wishing to register for this seminar may do so at the DAA during museum hours.

Social
IAC Children's Competition
THE dates of finals of the Children's Competition will take place at IAC Fumaites on 13th, 14th, 15th, 27th and 28th December '89 and 18th January '90 respectively. For more details contact Indian Schools.

Kapilku meeting
KAPISANANG Pilipino sa Kuwait (Kapilku) will hold an Officer's Meeting on Tuesday, December 19 at Kabayan Restaurant at 7:30 pm. Topics to be discussed include: *Miting de Advance* on December 22 at Philippine Embassy premises at 1:00 pm. Computer course and awarding of Certificate of Attendance; and Kapilku's Statement of Accounts.

Pongal celebrations
BHARATHI Kalai Mandram is organising Pongal Celebrations on 29th December in the Indian Arts Circle auditorium with a variety of entertainments for children and adults from 5 to 8.30 pm. All are welcome. For details and entry passes please contact 3716976, 3718935, 5631230 or 5627718.

Saaz Aur Aawaz
FEB 2 Saaz Aur Aawaz, one of the leading Indian musical groups of Kuwait present their fourth musical programme entitled *Bhule Bisle Geet*. The show includes Hindi film songs at the Indian Arts Circle, Fumaites on February 2, 1990. Passes will be available shortly.

Vishal Musical Group
VISHAL Musical Group is conducting their 2nd musical programme on Friday, January 5 at 6.00 pm at Fumaites Indian Arts Circle. The programme contains the most popular old and new hit songs from Hindi films. Also classical and fast dances by young talented artists. Centres for distribution of passes will be announced shortly.

Southerners
DEC 22: Southerners invite their members and guests to celebrate X'mas family get-together at the Ramada Al Salam Hotel (the new Al Mirage Ballroom) to the excellent music by Top Ranks and Mr Leo's Magic Show. Santa Clause will be distributing gifts to all kids and other attractive gifts to prize winners. Fun and entertainment for entire family starting from 10am on December 22, 1989. For passes contact Ligory on 2425705 or 2412444.

Goodbye 1989
SUPER Top Ranks present the most fabulous show of the year: *Goodbye 1989*. The programme includes glamorous dance performances from Hindi, English, Punjabi and Arabic. Popular dance "Ghazal-Neh-Kiya-Ha-Ishara" from Trivedi by Valencia Rose Bud Tanaka and Group, and the most popular pop-band Ajena, will give performances, especially for the Arab audience. The show will be on December 29 from 4 pm onwards. All are welcome at the Doha Entertainment City's Starlight Theatre. Entry to city is free. For more info: Kalid Fawzi on 4879455, Tennakoon on 4319864 and Valencia Rose Bud 5615291.

People's Trust Club
DEC 29: People's Trust Club welcomes you to a day of your life at Ramada Al Salam (Marriott) Hotel, New Ballroom from 10.30 am onwards. Nimble feet, hungry palate, perfect blend of music and style. A get-together with buffet. Featuring Stepping Stones, Top Ranks, Perfect Strangers. There will be novelties and surprises galore.

Star Nite
DEC 21: Thursday Christmas dinner social at Ramada Al Salam Le Mirage Ballroom from 9 pm with Stepping Stones music. Variety entertainment and prizes galore for lucky 555 promotion and X'mas Hamper draws with sumptuous buffet at midnight. Children's programme commences at 6 to 8.30 pm with Fancy Dress Competition.



Upasana

One of the leading musical groups is conducting their 6th musical programme on Friday, December 22 at 5.30 pm at Fumaites. The programme contains most of the latest hit songs from Hindi, Tamil and Malayalam. For entry passes, please contact Tel. 3987249/3986956/3987396/5643643/5638762/4315374/4314018. The picture shows Ambika Suryanarayanan, Sunitha and Swapna.

Kapilku's drama competition
Kerala Arts and Literature Promoting Association of Kuwait (Kapilku) is organising a Malayalam drama competition on the 9th and 10th February 1990.

One act plays of 40 minutes duration will only be considered for the competition. Prizes will be awarded for best drama, best script (only for amateur creations from Kuwait) best direction. Stage setting, best actor (Prem Nazir award) best actress & best child artist, from the selected entries.

Interested parties may send their applications along with a copy of the script to Varghese Paradayil, P.O. Box 47, 13001 Safat Kuwait.

For more details pls contact Varghese 5635481, Kurien 5658072 or Balakrishnan 4316737.

Cultural function
ON the occasion of Victory Day of Bangladesh, a cultural function will be organised by the Bangladesh Association on Friday, Dec 22, at 6.00 pm at the Sharq Co-operative auditorium. All Bangladeshis are invited to the programme.

British Council
STORY time and Father Christmas at the British Council, Thursday, 21 Dec., 10.00 am - 12 noon. Come and have lots of fun (Christmas stories, cartoons, games and refreshments) and a word/photograph with Father Christmas. Children of ages 3-7 are invited. Kindly book seats by calling 2515512, 2533204 and 2533227. Please note that only children with tickets (free, but will have to be collected from the Library) will be admitted. P.S. to Parents - Bring your camera.

Christmastide 1989
A series of Holy functions will take place at the Holy Family Cathedral starting Dec 24. On this date, there will be Holy Masses from 7.00 am to 6.00 pm in English and Konkani. Procession and Pontifical High Mass will be at 11.00 pm. On Dec 25 the Holy Masses will start from 7.00 am to 7.00 pm in five different languages. On Dec 31 the Holy Masses will start at 7.00 am to 11 pm in English and Konkani and on New Year's, they will start from 7.00 am to 7.00 pm, again in five different languages. For more information contact 2434637.

Kapilku's X'Mas
THE Kapisanang Pilipino sa Kuwait (The Association of Filipinos in Kuwait) (Kapilku) will celebrate the festive season in Kuwait with the main purpose to share the spirit of Christmas and New Year in a more harmonious relationship with its members, on December 29, 1989.

The Filipino Song Festival, an amateur singing contest which is open to all Filipinos, will be one of the many programmes to be staged. Valuable prizes await the winners and top five best singers will also receive trophies.

All the candidates of the just concluded Hiyas ng Pilipinas - Kuwait '89 will show their beautiful gowns. The top three best gowns will receive trophies and valuable prizes from sponsors.

The Barong Tagalog fashion show open to all Filipino males will be an added attraction to the celebration of the festive season.

All interested participants who wish to join the song festival, fashion shows for Barong Tagalog for men and gowns for



Atkins Christmas Party

W.S. Atkins Overseas Limited recently held their annual Christmas dinner at a local Kuwait hotel. A raffle took place for a return air ticket kindly donated by British Airways. The lucky winner was Teresa Abraham, a look place for a return air ticket kindly donated by the ticket by Susan O'Toole, wife of British Airways Secretary with W.S. Atkins, who was presented with the ticket by left to right Abraham, O'Toole and Manager for Kuwait and Iraq, Laurie O'Toole. The picture shows from left to right Abraham, O'Toole and Beryl Hyett, wife of W.S. Atkins Resident Director, Mr D.O. Hyett.

Kuwait Nomads R.F.C.
THE Kuwait Nomads Annual Xmas Dinner will be held on Thursday, December 21 at 7.30 pm. For more information contact: S. Hill on 5391720, R. Houston on 5658435 or G. Adams on 5644533.

Kuwait Welsh Society
A CHRISTMAS party will be held on December 28, 1989 at 8 pm. For details ring 3721383 or 3713467.

Lecture & Video: The school system in England & Wales
HOW is the British school system currently structured? What is the National Curriculum? Why has GCSE replaced GCE 'O' levels? Find out by coming to our lecture and video showing. In the British Council Gallery on Saturday 23rd December from 6.00 - 7.30. Please telephone to reserve your seat.

TELEVISION PROGRAMME

KTV 1	Satellite	KTV 2
MORNING PERIOD	12.15 Holy Quran and Closedown	6.00 Opening announcement & Holy Quran
9.30 Opening and Holy Quran		6.10 The Little Rascals. A cartoon series for children
9.40 Sabah Al Kher, news and variety		6.30 Mac and Mutley. Training dogs to help mentally retarded, dumb and deaf people... Raising and cleaning dogs... A dog that sings with its trainer.
9.50 Cartoons		7.00 Roving Report. A weekly round-up of local, Arab and International news.
10.05 Magazine D'Actualite (repetition)		7.30 Charles in Charge. The landlord notifies the family that he is going to sell the house... Charles has to work out away for solving this problem.
10.20 Watadour Al Dawaer: Arabic serial (part 3)		8.00 News in English
11.30 Sabah Al Kher News		8.30 The Scientific Progress. A weekly local programme about various topics and scientific achievements in Kuwait.
11.35 United Arab Emirates Popular Arts: Variety programme (final part)		9.00 Miami Vice "Jack of all Trades" Jack is released on bail by the help of a cop, who is Jack's relative... Both become involved with "Alessandro" a drug trafficker... and the police team have to find the real relation between them and Alessandro gang...
12.20 Sabah Al Kher News		10.00 Bustin Loose
12.30 News Summary		10.30 The Dark Angel. Maud becomes increasingly obsessed by a portrait of her uncle Silas who she sees as an enigmatic Byron-like figure, romantic and rebellious...
12.35 Holy Quran and Closedown		11.30 News in Brief
EVENING PERIOD		11.45 Magazine D'Actualite
4.00 Opening and Holy Quran		
4.15 The World Today via Satellite (repetition)		
4.45 Breen: Cartoon serial		
5.15 Mama Anisa and the Children: Local Children's programme		
6.00 Night chemists, airlines and official advertisements		
6.15 Al Bahr La Yabtale Al Shams: Arabic serial (part 3)		
7.15 Holy Quran and Science: Religious programme, prepared and presented by Dr Ahmad Shawqi Ibrahim		
8.00 Omsiyat Al Ithneen: Local programme, prepared and presented by Mohammed Al Bajes		
8.30 Good Evening and local news		
9.00 News in Arabic		
9.45 Al Manzel Al Khafi: Arabic serial (part 7)		
10.35 Maseer Al Mutanabi: Historical serial (part 12) starring Abdullah Ghailth, Sameeha Ayoub, Amena Rezz and Abu Zahra		
11.45 News summary		
11.50 The World Today via		

CINEMA

Al Andulus
Nowhere to Hide
Salmiyah
Hall booked
Al Hamra
Main Azaad Hoon
Drive-in
Licence to Kill

Al Firdous
Main Azaad Hoon
Fahaeel
Just a Damned Soldier
Al Jahra
Raiders of Paradise

Granada
Arabic film
Salaibkhat
A Time for Loving

Jleeb
Raj Lakhi Srikanth
Ahmadi Drive-in
Good Morning Vietnam.

NIGHT CHEMIST

Kuwait
Istiqal Pharmacy
Safat Square
Aji Pharmacy
Palestine St.
Hawalli and Nugra
Al Qatan Pharmacy
Nugra
Salmiya
Sahara Pharmacy
Salem Al Mubarak St
Fahaeel
Badiya Pharmacy
Dabbous St.
Farwaniya
Munawer Pharmacy
South Market St.
Riggei
Riggei Pharmacy
Riggei area
Jahra
Al Najah Pharmacy
4th Area

PRAYERS

Fajr	5.12 am
Zohr	11.44
Asr	2.34 pm
Maghreb	4.53
Isha	6.15



Malaysian Royal family visits the Meridien

Le Meridien Kuwait recently welcomed Sultan Salahuddin Abdulaziz Shah and his family who were in Kuwait for a private visit. Mr Keaton S. Woods, General Manager and Mr Youssef Al Ghabra, Public Relations Manager, were among those who welcomed them.

ladies can contact V. F. Sarah on Tel. 4843447.
Deadline for submission of entries is December 22.

SPORTS

IAC table tennis
THE IAC table tennis tournament from Dec 29 till Jan 5. All members, their families and guests interested in participating please call IAC (Tel. 3904817) after 7 pm, or Jagdish at Tel. 2433552, or Sharma at Tel. 2644863 for entry passes and details.

Discover the world down under
Learn to scuba dive. Classes will be in small groups. Course is for approximately 6 weeks beginning early January. Padi Certification upon completion of Open Water Course. For details visit Discover Scuba Nights at Kuwait International Hotel on 5th and 8th January or call 2530000/8050 (Antony Kingma).

At the Holiday Inn Health Club and Recreation Centre
SWIMMING lessons available all year round with qualified swimming instructors. Open to non members. Mon-Tues-Wed 3.30 to 5.30, beginners-improvers-adults. Mixed keep fit classes, Wed 5-6 Thurs 6-7, Fri 12-1.00 and 1-2.00, Sat 5-6.00. Ladies keep fit, Mon 5-6, Tues 5-6, Fri 5-6 and Sun 5.30-6.30. Martial arts w/ black belt instructor Mon-Wed 6-ton Taekwondo Sat-Mon, 7-8 Thurs 5-6. Bowling alley available for private company and community tournaments. Five squash courts. Squash handicap every Sunday start 6 pm - all standards, open to non-members. Squash coaching available from professional coach everyday, from 1 pm. Massage for men and women. Gym facilities for men and women. Tennis courts - coaching available. Plus lots more. Phone for further details - Recreation Manager, 4742000 ext 6788 Julie Dent or 6700 recreation.

GET INTO THE HOLIDAY SPIRIT!

Don't Miss It!

December is the time to visit the Jashanmal shops where beauty consultants from Parfums Christian Dior - Lancome - Clarins - Chanel will demonstrate various makeup techniques and advice on skincare and perfumes.

Do not miss this unique opportunity to collect your surprises with purchase at:-

Fahed Al Salem Showroom
18th - Clarins (Consultation) 23rd - Chanel
19th - Lancome 24th - Chanel
20th - Lancome
21st - Parfums Christian Dior (Makeup)
Salmiya Showroom
19th - Clarins 21st - Lancome
20th - Parfums Christian Dior

Jashanmal & Partners Ltd.
Kuwait - Fahed Al Salem St. Tel. 2432420, 2432071/72
Sa. Mu. - Salem Al Mubarak St. Tel. 5712185

Middle East

Badriya Awadi represents a new breed of Arab women



Dr Badriya: high post

First Kuwaiti woman to get her Ph.D. in international law

By Lina Al Khalafawi
Arab Times staff

DR BADRIYA ABDULLAH AL AWADI is the first Kuwaiti woman to get her Ph.D. in Environmental International Law and International Law. She was awarded her degree in 1975 from London University.

Awadi also was the first and youngest Kuwaiti woman (35 years) posted as the dean of faculty of law at Kuwait University from 1979 to 1982.

Now, Awadi is the General Co-ordinator for technical and administrative affairs at the Regional Organisation for Protection for Marine Environment.

As an expert, Awadi who is highly qualified and internationally known, was invited by the Arab League to participate in amending its charter.

Awadi who portrays a new era that Arab women achieved in occupying different posts, is a member in many organisations such as Board of Directors Committee of International Advocates, Board of Directors for Environmental Legislation Institute, International Organisation for Advancement of Science, and the Legal Experts Committee for Implementing International Labour Recommendations and

Agreements.

She is also known as the Vice-President of the International Academy for Human Rights and a member in the International Organisation for Combating Racial Discrimination.

Awadi with her high level of dedication and proficiency, brings to any activity she undertakes a lot of wealth of experience.

During her tenure as the dean of faculty of law, she introduced human rights as one of the subjects to be studied. Till then it was being taught as part of the other courses like criminal law, law of war, and personal status law. "It is very essential that individuals should know about their rights and be aware when tackling problems in their daily life," she said.

After 20 years in the field of teaching at the university, Awadi retired and opened a consultancy firm this year. This has not stopped her from following other activities at Ropme.

"What I've studied about international law, I am practicing at Ropme and I found myself in this field," she said.

Protection of environment is growing very important day after day, she said and added that Ropme is currently considering the legal framework to force ship owners or the insurance company to undertake salvaging operations. She pointed out that 130 barrels of toxic waste were found dumped off UAE shores and were

believed to have drifted from a sunken ship onto the shore. The review of the special protocol on marine environment protection was done earlier in Dec 1985 and was submitted for endorsement to the Ropme executive committee and that due to the Iraq-Iran war at the time, the endorsement of the protocol was postponed. The committee unanimously agreed last March to approve the draft protocol prepared by the Ropme legal and technical experts.

She pointed out that the current meeting was aimed at preparing the final formula of the protocol from the technical and legal viewpoints taking into consideration that the draft protocol had already been endorsed by the executive committee.

"It is noteworthy to command the existing sincere cooperation between the member states and the legal and technical experts, through whose efforts Ropme had consolidated our effort for the protection of the environment," she said.

When I asked her about the role of Kuwaiti women in the society, she said that there are a lot of educated women in different fields, yet the percentage of literacy is around 50 per cent which means still a lot have to be done. However, women in Kuwait have jumped many stages and succeeded compared to others in the Gulf states.

"Women cannot be blamed all the time, but if they were given chances like men they can develop and upgrade their society. Also if they were aware for their rights they can fight to get them," she said.

Awadi believes in defending the rights of Arab women and thus opened her consultancy legal firm that deals with problems that affects women's daily life.

She strongly believes that all women should be financially independent so that they do not depend on men and can solve their own problems. This is the main problem for women in the Arab countries and the Third World.

Awadi commenting on the higher education system in the Arab world said that students should try to acquire more knowledge about the world around them instead of restricting themselves to the courses they study and that education at vocational institutes should be based more on practical training.

Awadi with heavy schedule of work every day is fond of reading and following the latest issues in the world. She is planning to conduct research concerning environment protection and women's rights.

Awadi who represents the new Arab woman wished that they should play a bigger role for the welfare of their societies.

Santa's bag full of film goodies

HOLLYWOOD, (UPI): Santa has a sleigh full of top-flight films for Christmas, traditionally the best movie season with the annual rush of Oscar contenders trying to slip in before the door shuts on 1989.

Unless a movie shows for at least a week in a Los Angeles area theatre during the calendar year, it is not eligible for Academy award consideration.

December release dates are desirable because the film will still be fresh in the minds of Academy members when they cast their votes, Oscar contenders released in, say, February or March tend to fade from memory.

Because comedies are rarely considered for best picture, best director or best actress and actor, studios release them all year around without a thought to awards.

The same is true for violent pictures aimed at big bucks with little or no hope for important Oscars — the "lethal weapons" and "black rains." But with sensitive love stories, basic drama and classic melodrama it is a different story. These often delicate, perishable films are saved until last.

And this Christmas' package of outstanding pictures may be the best in many years.

The list starts with "My Left Foot," the true story of cerebral palsy victim Christy Brown, a noted Irish painter, starring Daniel Day-Lewis in what could be an Oscar-nominated performance.

It won't gross \$100 million, but it is a memorable motion picture.

Then there is "Driving Miss Daisy," a screen version of the Pulitzer prize-winning play dealing with a southern Jewish matron and her developing friendship with her black chauffeur.

Both Morgan Freeman and Jessica Tandy, along with the film, will merit Academy attention.

"Triumph of the Spirit," with William Dafoe as a Jewish Greek boy in Auschwitz during World War II, is another unforgettable picture and performance with a different, arresting approach to the holocaust.

"Born On The Fourth Of July" stars Tom Cruise who comes of age as a powerful actor in the story of a Vietnam war veteran in a gripping story of a patriot in transition.

Paul Newman gives his best performance in years in "Blaze" playing Louisiana Governor Earl K. Long, a quirky story of politics, an ill-starred love affair and scandal.

The there is "Enemies, A Love Story," directed by one of America's best, Paul Mazursky. His interpretation of Isaac Bashevis Singer's novel about a holocaust survivor who marries three women in New York in 1949 is a touching story of the subtle relationships between men and women.

"The Music Box" is an intense account of a daughter (Jessica Lange) defending her father (Alvin Karpis) accused of committing war crimes during World War II. The plot twists mesmerize audiences who alternately believe in the father's innocence and guilt.

There is glory for the entire cast of "Gloria," the story of the black 54th Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry in the civil war. Brilliant performances are given by Denzel Washington and Morgan Freeman. Young Matthew Broderick is impressive as their callow leader.

Broderick scores again starring with Sean Connery and Dustin Hoffman in "Family Business," a rip-roaring action comedy of three generations of a lawless family. Director Sidney Lumet gives the film his special touch.

"We're No Angels" teams a real odd couple, Robert Deniro and Sean Penn as a couple of escaped convicts posing as priests in a series of misadventures that are as funny as they are improbable. Both actors appear to have the time of their lives.

Frenzied pace

Greed replaces Bangkok charm

BANGKOK, Thailand, (AP): The death knell of exotic Bangkok, once a languid city of tree-shaded canals and quiet temples, is being sounded by the thud of pile drivers and the thunder of traffic.

There is no reprieve. Bangkok has become one vast work site of mushrooming high-rises, choking traffic and pollution at dangerous levels.

Some have dubbed 1989 Bangkok's year of the condominium. Others call it the year of greed, referring to the frenzied rush for short-term personal profit at the expense of civic well-being.

The Thai capital has been modernized at a steady pace since the 1960s, when war in neighbouring Indo-China and an influx of American dollars and soldiers lubricated the economy.

But the real boom began about three years ago. With annual growth rates at nine per cent to 10 per cent, Thailand is talked about as Asia's next economic miracle and Bangkok as the dynamic hub of peninsular Southeast Asia.

Land prices in the city have soared to as high as \$12,000 a square metre (\$1,115 a square foot) in prime areas. Millions are being made quickly in land speculation and construction. Rents, not long ago among the most reasonable in the world, are approaching the levels of New York City, Hong Kong and London.

Thai diplomats and others returning after just a few years abroad say they can barely recognize old neighbourhoods. In the upper class residential area along Sukhumvit Road, for example, more than 50 towering condominiums, apartment blocks and office buildings are rising on what were once leafy family compounds and peaceful lanes.

Many foreign tourists — some five million visited this year — are disillusioned to find that rather than the exotica they expected, Bangkok is little different from the big cities of the West they had left and that the much vaunted Thai smile has turned into a hard hustle.

Bangkok's transformation is nothing unique on the Asian urban landscape: Tokyo, Taipei, Hong Kong, Singapore and other cities already have passed through similar phases. But what worries planners and informed citizens here is that Bangkok is not only destroying its past, but possibly also its future, with unplanned growth.

For years, there has been talk of master zoning plans, green belts, noise abatement and traffic alleviation. Today, commercial buildings pop up amid residential areas, lush rice lands circling the city are being paved, and motorcycles without mufflers slam around some of the world's rudest drivers as police look idly on.

City officials say tackling Bangkok's woes is thwarted by lack of resources, corruption, slack enforcement, petty political infighting and poor laws.

Recently, some at city hall argued against allowing buildings of 91, 82 and 63 stories from going up, saying that traffic in their vicinity would be overwhelming. But existing city regulations do not name traffic as a factor in denying building permits.

Forecasts are largely ominous. The United Nations predicts Bangkok's population will nearly double to some 12 million by the year 2000, making it the 10th largest city in the world.

The Thailand Development and Research Institute says the city's mighty Menam Chao Phraya, "the River of Kings," will be devoid of all aquatic life by the end of the century unless decisive action is taken immediately.

Every day, the institute says, 1.25 million cubic metres of untreated waste is fed into the river from sewers and the remaining, befouled canals that once crisscrossed Bangkok and earned it the appellation "Venice of the East."

Already serious, pollution is expected to worsen as more factories sprout around the capital. The main culprit now in air pollution is the omnipresent motor vehicle and its leaded fuel.

The National Environment Board recently found lead levels along Bangkok streets to be up to four times higher than standards in the United States, and hospitals are reporting children with abnormally high lead levels.

"Things are not as bad as they're going to be, but at the same time our tolerance level stretches," Mecha Viravaidya, a leading development expert, said in an interview. "The people who have must begin to give to those who do not before it is yanked away from them."

The topic of inordinate greed by the few is daily talk of the town. A "me-first" attitude is often held responsible for many of Bangkok's woes.

"I believe if they (unscrupulous) could dig up Thailand and put it in a parcel, they would sell the country, too," Bangkok Post columnist Norma Tongtham wrote recently.

Thai academics, journalists and some technocrats criticize blatant pollution by commercial enterprises, disregard for public well-being by real estate developers, and the quick resort to bribery to circumvent regulations and laws.

They note that vast economic power — and behind-the-scenes decision-making — is still in the hands of a new Sino-Thai families and that it is their ethos rather than the traditional Thai one of being satisfied with a modest lifestyle that now prevails Bangkok.

Standing in stark contrast is Chamlong Srimuang, widely expected to win re-election in January as Bangkok's mayor.

The 55-year-old staunch Buddhist seems to represent older, rural values that still attract a large, albeit still largely powerless, segment of Bangkok's population.

"We must not be selfish," is one of Chamlong's tenets, along with "eat less and spend less." And he practices what he preaches.

Chamlong sleeps on a floor mat, eats one meal a day and dresses in the rough-spun cotton shirts of country farmers.

From camels to spices, everything imaginable sold

Fabled souks of Morocco

By Kaeel Sakakeeny

IN THE MOROCCAN MARKETPLACES (CSM):

There are so many things that can be said about Morocco. You can speak of it as one of the first countries to recognize the new American republic. You can mention the fascinating mix of conservative Islamic traditions with the more liberal French ones, and comment on the amazing language skill of the hundreds of blue — or brown-eyed street urchins, who greet you in English, French, Arabic, or even a little Japanese.

Of course, you can talk about Rick's non-existent Cafe Americain in the Kasbah of Casablanca made famous by the great Humphrey Bogart. And, if you can, you can describe the impossibly deep-blue skies, set off by towering mountains and bright yellow lemon trees.

But most of all, you have to talk about the souks of Morocco, those fabled, crowded, overpowering outdoor marketplaces with names that seem to come from the movies — Marrakech, Fez, Meknes, Tangier and my favourite, the Berber mountain marketplace of Chechaouen. There I watched with fascinated parental horror as my daughter submitted to the embrace of a python, while an ancient snake charmer serenaded the serpent into submission.

A souk is an absolutely crazy series of twisting streets crowded with stalls and linked together by corrugated tin or straw roofs or tent tops, beneath which everything imaginable can be sold, from camels to spices and herbs, to finely wrought gold ornaments and dazzling coloured carpets.

Up on the rickety second floor of a building around an outdoor courtyard, weavers are hard at work making the famous Moroccan jalabas, or loosely woven tunics.

The weaving rooms are very small and cramped with four or more weavers. A few words of shouted greeting in French, Arabic, and English soon dissolve the initial suspicion and tension. "Salam allaykum," I called out, "wa allaykum salam," was the answer. "Peace be upon you," and "Upon you, peace."

That seemed to do it. The weavers took me into their stalls. The sounds of the loom are

accompanied by music to relieve the tedium of the work as the weavers ply a trade handed down through generations. The wool is brought here by the Berber mountain dwellers with their conical straw hats, multi-coloured skirts and in many cases, faces and hands marked by the distinctive Berber tattoos.

Muhammad, a friend and guide, explains that the men make the jalabas and the women, the carpets. It takes about two days to make a jalaba, and a week or so for a carpet.

There's as much art involved in arriving at the price as there is in making jalabas. They cost as much as you are willing to pay, but also as little as \$16.00.

Along the winding cobblestone streets repairmen are tapping, tapping individual stones in place as they probably have done for hundreds of years. The only concession to modern technology here is an ancient wheelbarrow.

In one shop there is another kind of tapping. Craftsmen are creating designs on pure bronze plates that scatter sunbeams around the dust-filled room. The master of this particular shop designed ornaments for the royal palace in Fez and teaches the art to about 25 young men of the village. The plates are cleaned by a time-honoured practice of squeezing lemon juice into the cracks and crevices.

The craftsmen strike the plates with a wooden mallet, a technique used to tell the difference between pure bronze and brass. The sound is wonderful, a deep resonant "gong" that vibrates in the head long after the sound has stopped. The master pronounces the verdict: This plate is 100 per cent bronze.

A soft, red glow from several small shops is accompanied by the rich smell of bread baking on open stone fires. These round, warm, moist loaves of Moroccan bread cost about six cents each, and oranges from a stall literally overflowing with the fresh fruit costs about 25 cents for nearly two pounds. As tinsmiths give way to the meat cutters, and donkey carts whiz by filled with squawking chickens, one particular sight dazzles the eye: the spice sellers' stalls.

You have to take a deep breath here, first just to let the mind catch up with the eye, but also to smell. To smell and see the 40 or 50 burlap bags filled with red,



A rug merchant's shop

green, yellow, and ochre spices laid out on a royal blue cloth. Spices whose exotic names and dazzling colours probably can't be expressed in the English language. The spice sellers dig deep into the bag, their hands and elbows dyed red with paprika and brown with henna.

I'm not the only one overwhelmed. A French visitor tries to take it all in, but can't. For him, as he laughingly puts it, "It's all too much, too much. Not at all like France."

Later, one particular sight stopped me in my tracks. Cas-

cading in front of me were mounds of olives. Not just the common, often shrivelled, supermarket variety, but a rainbow of olives — black, green, red, and yellow. Some were stuffed with bright red peppers while others had a sheen of deep purple. All were surrounded by brilliant yellow lemons and arranged with the practiced eye of an expert.

It takes more than one visit, of course, to capture all of the confusion, excitement, and mystery of the souks of Morocco. When you are tired you can eat meat

dishes prepared with pepper, ginger, cumin, saffron, butter and oil. You can drink sweet mint tea, and enjoy honey-drenched dates, melons, grapes, apricots, plums — all this for pennies. You can watch the hard-working merchants take a few minutes from their work to go and pray in simple rooms used as a mosque, a touching and inspiring sight.

You can rejoice the seemingly endless stream of humanity that is the souks of Morocco... or you can pass out of the din and joy, and carry away the sight and sounds of a lifetime.

Botanic gardens try to save plants

A modern Noah's Ark: World-wide conservation efforts

LONDON, (AP): Botanic gardens around the world are joining in an effort to try to save an estimated one-quarter of all plant species that face extinction before their possible benefits to mankind can be assessed.

"A botanic garden is a modern Noah's Ark and our aim is to get all 1,500 of them working together so that all these plants are cultivated somewhere and eventually reintroduced to the wild," said Peter Wyse Jackson, an Irish botanist.

There are about 250,000 different kinds of plants and in the next 30 to 40 years, 60,000 of them face threats to their survival — most of them before we have discovered if they have any value to us," he said in an interview.

Wyse Jackson spoke at the Botanic Gardens Conservation secretariat, next to the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew in West London. He calls the secretariat an intens-

sive care unit for plants.

It was formed in 1987 as part of the Switzerland-based World Conservation Union and has 260 botanic gardens in 70 countries as members.

Vernon Heywood, the secretariat's British director and chief plant scientist for conservation, has written the strategy for the worldwide conservation effort, detailing how botanic gardens should co-operate and conserve plants in the wild, in cultivation and in gene banks.

"Botanic gardens are already supporting the programme by joining the secretariat and taking part in its work," Wyse Jackson said.

Many plants have never been examined for possible useful products they can provide, such as medicines, oils and food. Thousands still lack scientific names.

"There is no country in the world where some plants are not in danger. The amount

spent on their conservation worldwide is small compared to animals and minuscule compared to the amount spent on almost everything else," Wyse Jackson said.

The secretariat says people depend on as few as 20 species of plants for more than 85 per cent of their food, yet the varieties of those plants are declining.

In the 1970s international alarm was raised about the loss of plants by forest clearance, construction, mining, swamp draining and pollution.

The problem is most acute in the tropical regions of South America and Southeast Asia, where 170,000 of all plant species are found, including more than half the world's flowering plants.

Europe has about 11,000 plant species but Colombia, Ecuador has one botanic garden, Peru four and Colombia 11.

Scientists no longer need seeds to multiply rare plants: they can put bits of stalk

and leaves that contain living genetic material into a "soup" of nutrients and grow tiny plantlets from them. Kew gardens does this in what it calls a micropropagation unit.

Kew Gardens also isolated a natural chemical from the Australian chestnut tree that is being used as an investigative probe of the way in which the AIDS virus enters the body cells. In addition, Kew Gardens managed to propagate cuttings from the last known specimen of the brown coffee plant from the Indian Ocean island of Rodrigues.

"It doesn't produce coffee but is so venerated that it may once have been used for medicine," Wyse Jackson said.

In the United States, the University of Wisconsin is recreating private vegetation, and Quindio Botanic Garden in Colombia has bought a tract of rain forest as the best way of studying what goes on there.

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Gambit forced to retire from series **Shammal and Magic Flute win races**

After Meraj departed, Dissanayake went on the offensive clouting two towering sixes off Haider, the second of which was in the last over when the Lankans required 10 runs victory, which was achieved with a single off the last ball of the innings. Dissanayake remained on 49 looking battle weary but still pleased with the result.

With the leeward wing mark approaching Gambit dropped her spinnaker, gybed around the mark and took a heading for the ODM (start). Shammal was able to gybe her spinnaker and keep it flying down the next leg.

Shammal: Winners WS5

Gambit crossed the Finish line 2 minutes 15 seconds ahead of Shammal. After handicap adjustment Shammal was declared the winner of WS5, Gambit second and Magic Flute third.

Shammal held onto the head during the next beat but, once again, Magic Flute reduced the lead to about 40 seconds at the windward mark. The final leg to finish was a run and both yachts flew spinnakers in an attempt to

Knicks stay unbeaten at home

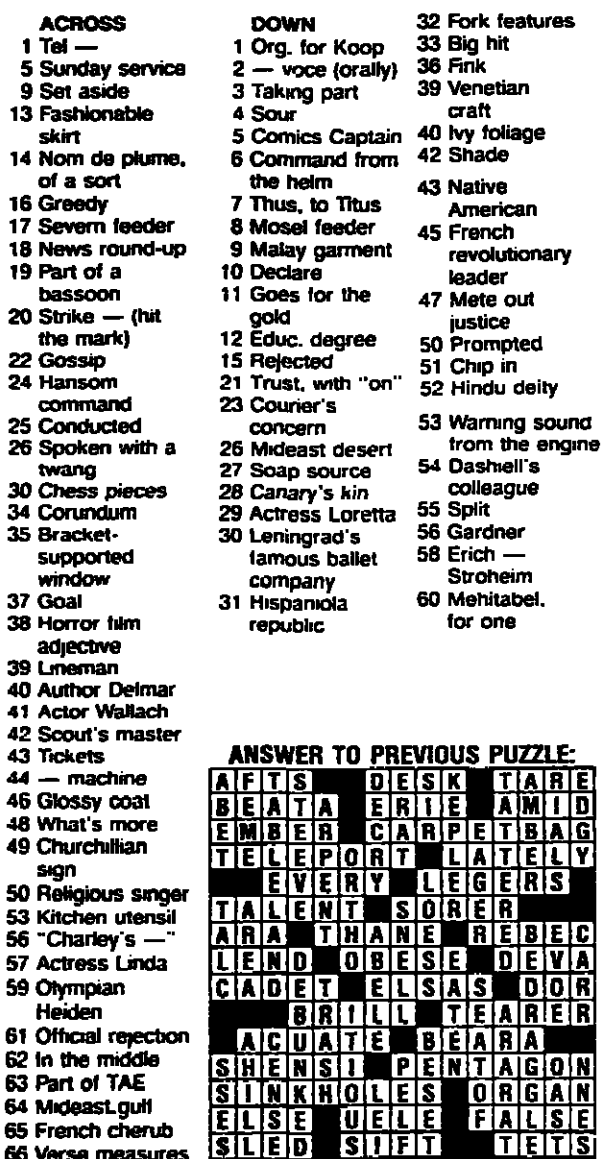
Lakers 99, Nets 92
Magic Johnson scored 28 points, including 10 in a 14-4 fourth-quarter run, to help the Los Angeles Lakers win their fourth straight, 99-92 over the New Jersey Nets.

Jeff Malone had 22 points for the Bullets, who won their third straight game. Adrian Dantley led Dallas with 22 points.

Results		
L.A. Lakers	99	New Jersey 92
New York	118	Sattle 97
Washington	112	Dallas 108
Chicago	115	Charlotte 104
San Antonio	125	Orlando 116
Miami	99	Milwaukee 96
Golden State	104	Detroit 92
L.A. Clippers	114	Denver 108



By Brant Parker and Johnny Hart



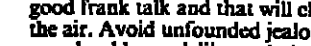
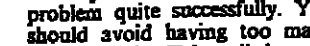
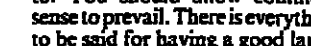
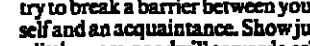
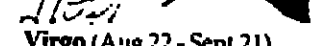
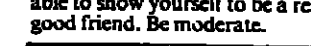
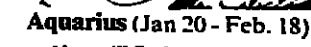
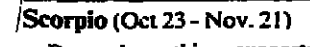
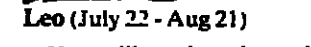
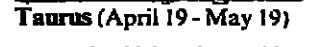
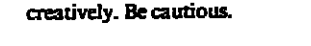
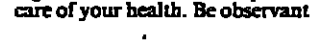
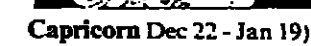
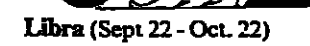
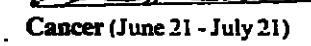
The bidding:

South	West	North	East
1 ♣	3 ♣	4 ♦	4 ♣
6 ♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

Opening lead: King of ♣

Winning with the ace from an ace-queen combination in this position is not new to us. We first saw the play pulled off by Britain's Tony Friday some 40 years ago. However, when it was made to tempt declarer into repeating a finesse which was going to lose. The version where it is used to give a false count of the hand is a new twist.

By Johnny Hart



"It doesn't bother you if I eat while you're smoking that big cigar, does it?"

A	F	T	S		D	E	S	K	T	A	R	E
B	E	A	T	A		E	R	I	E		A	M
E	M	B	E	R		C	A	R	P	E	T	B
T	E	L	E	P	O	R	T		L	A	T	E
		E	V	E	R		L	E	G	E	R	S
T	A	L	E	N	T		S	O	R	E	R	
A	R	A		T	H	A	N	E		R	E	B
L	E	N	D		O	B	E	S	E		D	E
C	A	D	E	T		E	L	S	A	S		D
				B	R	I	L	L		T	E	A
A	C	U	A	T	E		B	E	A	R	A	
S	H	E	N	T		P	E	N	T	A	G	O
S	I	N	K		H	O	L	E	S		O	R
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De Silva and Mahanama hit half centuries Sleep cuts short Lankan dreams

HOBART, Australia, Dec 17, (Reuters): Australian leg-spinner Peter Sleep dissolved Sri Lanka's dreams of a hefty first innings lead today, taking three wickets in 13 balls to hasten the touring side's dismissal for 216.

But Sri Lanka struck back immediately, reducing Australia to 25 for two in their second innings, a lead of 33, at stumps on the second day of an absorbing second Test which will almost certainly yield a result following the draw in the first Test.

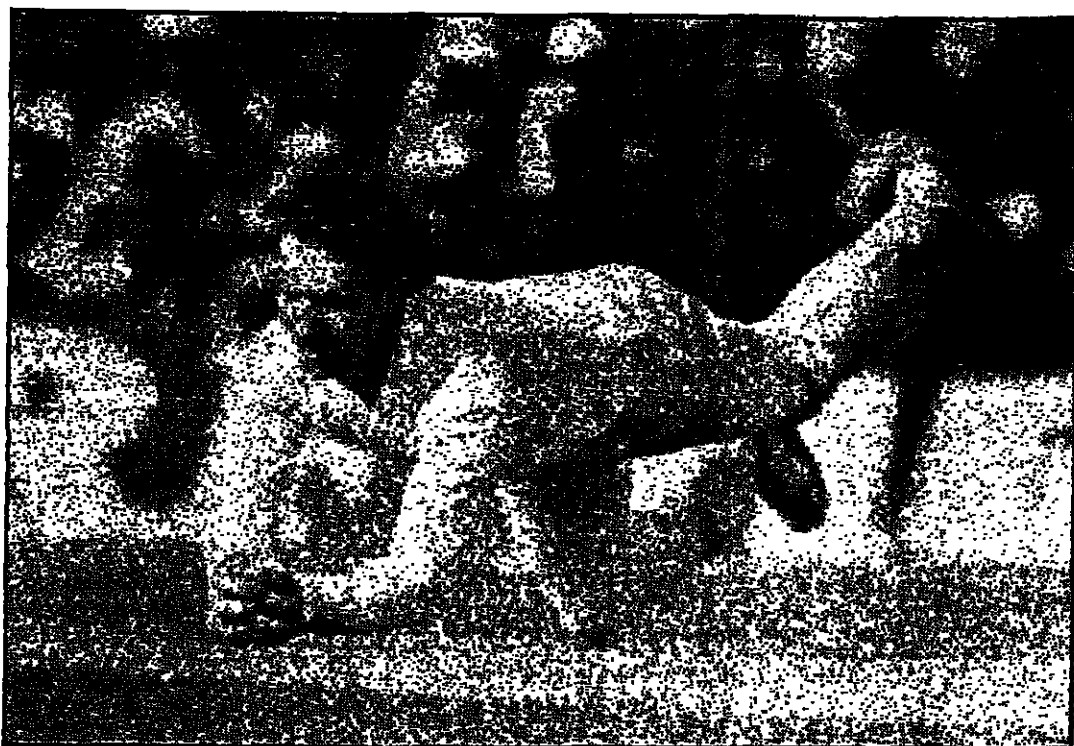
Australian captain Allan Border broke the world record for Test catches by a fielder, brilliantly grabbing an edge from last man Ramesh Ratnayake in the slips, his 123rd victim. Former Australian captain Greg Chappell held the previous record.

Sleep, hammered for two sixes and a four in two overs before lunch by Aravinda de Silva, did not bowl in the second session but returned to the attack after tea with Sri Lanka in charge.

After losing only one wicket to Australia's pacemen all day Sri Lanka suddenly found Sleep's spin, supported by excellent close to the wicket catching, impossible to resist.

Recalled for his 13th Test in a decade, Sleep dismissed Sri Lanka captain Arjuna Ranatunga for 21, Hashan Tillekeratne for nought and top scorer Roshan Mahanama for 85 as the touring side collapsed from 180 for four at tea to 193 for seven.

Merv Hughes ran through the tail-enders to finish with three for 68. Sleep, who topscored in Australia's first innings with 47 not



Border breaks the record for catches

out, claimed three for 26 while Greg Campbell and Terry Alderman shared the remaining four wickets.

Thirteen wickets fell yesterday but Mahanama and De Silva encountered few problems this morning when Sri Lanka resumed at 27 for three.

The two added 128 for the fourth wicket with De Silva dropped by Dean Jones close in on the leg side early on, taking the

leading role.

As in his innings of 167 in Brisbane De Silva mixed caution with blazing aggression, hitting three sixes and nine fours before being dismissed lbw by Campbell with the score on 146.

Ranatunga's departure 42 runs later, after a rash drive off Sleep got him caught by Tom Moody at mid-on, triggered the Sri Lanka collapse.

Tillekeratne was superbly

caught by Mark Taylor one-handed low down after the ball deflected off wicketkeeper Ian Healy while Healy himself ended Mahanama's best Test knock with a smart catch.

Australia's second innings started disastrously. After resing an injured leg all day David Boon slashed at his first ball and hit a stinging catch to Ramesh Ratnayake in the gully.

Tom Moody, battling for his

Test place after the astonishing 355 not out for Western Australia, yesterday by Geoff Marsh, was dropped by De Silva at third slip.

But Ratnayake, this time with the ball, soon disposed of Moody caught behind by Tillekeratne for five as Australia plumed the depths of 10 for two. Nightwatchman Merv Hughes and Mark Taylor took Australia through to stumps without further tremors.

Scoreboard

AUSTRALIA first innings (overnight 27 for three)
R. Mahanama c Healy b Sleep ... 85
D. Ranatunga c Moody b Alderman 2
A. Gurusinghe c Taylor b Alderman 0
Aravinda de Silva lbw b Campbell 75
A. Ranatunga c Moody b Sleep ... 21
H. Tillekeratne c Taylor b Sleep ... 0
R. Ratnayake c Taylor b Hughes ... 9
G. Labrooy b Hughes ... 11
C. Ramanyake not out ... 4
R. Ratnayake c Border b Hughes ... 0
Extras (lb-4, nb-3) ... 7
Total ... 216
Fall of wickets: 1-11, 2-15, 3-18, 4-146, 5-188, 6-192, 7-193, 8-201, 9-216.
Bowling: Alderman 23-2-71-2 (1nb), Campbell 23-4-41-2, Hughes 21-4-68-3, Sleep 10-4-26-3, Waugh 6-3-6-0 (2nb).

AUSTRALIA second innings
M. Taylor not out ... 11
D. Boon c Ratnayake b Labrooy ... 0
Moody c Tillekeratne b Ratnayake 5
M. Hughes not out ... 9
Extras ... 0
Total (for two wickets) ... 25
Fall of wickets: 1-1, 2-10.
To bat: Allan Border, Dean Jones, Steve Waugh, Ian Healy, Peter Sleep, Terry Alderman, Greg Campbell.
Bowling to date: Labrooy 4-0-21-1, Ratnayake 4-2-13-1.

Chavez retains crown

MEXICO CITY, Dec 17, (Reuters): Mexico's Julio Cesar Chavez retained his World Boxing Council super lightweight title yesterday with an impressive third-round victory over Argentine challenger Alberto Cortes.

Chavez sent Cortes reeling to the canvas with a rapid-fire flurry of blows one minute and 56 seconds into the round. The challenger rose at the count of eight but the referee waved the fight to a close.

Chavez, who was making his second defence of the WBC crown, extended his unbeaten record to 68 victories, 54 of them within the distance.

Cortes, the WBC's fifth-ranked contender, was undefeated after 44 bouts before climbing into the ring with Chavez.

He took the fight inside and traded punches with Chavez courageously. But Chavez outboxed him, getting the best of all the exchanges from the first round when he drew a thick stream of blood from Cortes nose.

The end for Cortes, who continued to bleed heavily, was apparent early in the third round when Chavez buckled his knees with a fierce left-right combination.

Cortes showed great heart during the brief fight, which Chavez had predicted would be over by the sixth round. But the 26-year-old Argentine was unable to snap back after the punishment he took in the second round.

The 27-year-old champion held the WBC's super featherweight and lightweight titles before ascending to the 140-pounds (63.5 kg) limit and stripping Roger Mayweather of the United States of the super lightweight title last May.

In the first defence of his new title, Chavez stopped Sammy Fuentes of Puerto Rico in the 10th round.

Chavez returns to Las Vegas on March 17 to face American Meldrick Taylor, the International Boxing Federation's super lightweight champion.



Chavez celebrates his victory. (Reuters wirephoto)



Julio Chavez (left) unleashes a left punch at Cortes. (Reuters wirephoto)

Edwardes helps Baggs stay at top

WITH 11 of the season's 18 games completed, Baggs can feel quite happy with their progress to date as they try to retain their Mouchel Monday Darts League championship.

However, as TCF once again proved, there are no easy matches to be found in this tough league. Facing the return fixture with some trepidation after a 6-0 thrashing in the first meeting, TCF played well enough to be in sight of a point at 2-2 after the singles matches. The not unfamiliar scenario however, of Steve Edwardes winning both his matches saw Baggs salvage both points, as he again underlined how important he has been to the team this season.

As a co-founder of Baggs in the days of the Salmiya Darts League, and one of the more long serving members of Kuwait darts, Edwardes' departure from Kuwait last weekend will be sad news to many, and not just his team-mates in Baggs and Nobblers.

Whilst Baggs found the going tough, Exiles were having even more trouble at Tyne Tees, as their variable form once more showed itself and they never looked like challenging the home team. Tony Wake bagged a brace of 140s, but still provided Exiles lone success as he lost to Tony Robinson. Andy Wilson helping himself to 3 high scores to keep himself in the hunt for the high scores trophy.

Exiles' off day made way for Campanologists who move up to 3rd after a stirring evening of competition at Monroes. In the end both men's and ladies matches ended as draws, but in an extremely entertaining manner. 140 was definitely the score of the night, as 6 in total were hit, Allan Anderson leading the way with 2 in his 4 high scores.

Opponents
There were 3 high scores each for Erik Christensen, Dougie Francis and John Watson, and just when it looked as though the celluloid heroes had their opponents on the ropes, Watson and Thomas hammered the trebles in the final MM game, and squeaked home by getting their required 3 bulls in 2 darts as Monroes threatened to close out the match.

Stars of the Yeast must be enjoying their weekly 1-5 results as they keep doing it, week in, week out. Victors this time were Cottar Hoose, helped by 3 high scores from Martyn Rix, as they remain in contention on 12 points. The ladies match provided a bagful of good scoring, and another draw for the Starlets. Stella Gardner was outstanding in registering the first ladies 140 of the year, but Hilary Milne responded with 2 MM trebles, and 3 bulls to keep CH Ladies in the game.

The full results summary for this week's Mouchel Monday Darts League fixtures is as follows, with Ladies' scores in brackets:

Cottar Hoose (2) 5 Stars the Yeast (2) 1
Monroes (2) 3 Campanols (2) 3
Tyne Tees FF (2) 5 Exiles (2) 1
Baggs (2) 4 T.C.F. (2) 2

Airikkala to conduct rally school

FLYING Finn, Pentti Airikkala is visiting Dubai this week to conduct a rally school for some of the Gulf's leading drivers. Forty-two-year-old Airikkala arrives in the emirates hot from his first World Championship Rally victory the Lombard RAC Rally in the UK. Driving for Mitsubishi in a Galant, Pentti took the RAC Rally in fine style, after a classic battle with Spaniard, Carlos Sainz, who was driving a Toyota.

Among those receiving the expert tuition of the Finnish star will be Marlboro Desert Challenge Champion, Abbas Al Mosawi from Qatar; Kuwait national champion Eid Falah; Lebanese ace Tony Georgiou (Oman) and locally based Michel Saleh. Attending from Saudi Arabia will be Mamdouh Khayat and Mohammed Al Malki.

The rally school is being held over three days from December 17 to 19. Day one and two of the school will be taken up with indoor instruction by Airikkala with the third and final day taken up with outdoor testing in Raliat Middle East Mitsubishi Galant. Mechanics spent last week preparing the vehicle for Airikkala's visit, following its run in the Dubai International Rally.

Following this week's rally school, Mitsubishi are expected to pick their crew for the Group A drive in a Mitsubishi Galant in the 1990 Middle East Rally Championship. The Group A entry of Mitsubishi will be regarded as a serious challenge to the Ford team of Qatar's Saeed Al Hajri, and the Toyota team of reigning Middle East champion, Mohammed Bin Sulayem.



A vehicle being prepared for Airikkala.

Kronberger wins

PANORAMA, Canada, Dec 17, (AP): Austria's Petra Kronberger won her first World Cup downhill race yesterday, finishing 21 seconds ahead of Michaela Gerg of West Germany.

Karen Percy of Canada was third.

Kronberger, 20, had a time of 1 minute 36.75 seconds. Gerg finished in 1:37.55, while Percy, the day's first skier over the husky course, had 1:37:56.

Weissflog takes 90-metre ski jump

TOKYO, Dec 17, (AP): Jens Weissflog of East Germany, the runner-up in the 1989 World Jump Championships, leaped 114.5 metres on his first try and went on to win the 90-metre event today in the World Cup Sapporo ski jump, the sixth of the 26-event World Cup competition.

The 25-year-old Weissflog leaped 112.5 metres on his second jump, earning a total of 227.0 points to beat Australia's Werner Haim by 16.5 points.

It was Weissflog's first World Cup victory this season. He competed in the 70-metre jump of the World Cup yesterday and placed 10th.

Weissflog was the runner-up in the 90-metre jump, but won the 70-metre jump at the World Championships in Lahti, Finland in February, 1989.

Haim collected 210.5 points on jumps of 114.0 metres on the first try and 105.0 metres on the second jump at the Okurayama Hill, site of the 1972 Sapporo winter Olympics on Japan's northernmost main island of Hokkaido.

Heinz Kuttin of Austria was third with 208.0 points on jumps of 115.5 metres and 101.5 metres.

Notable quotes from sports figures in 1989

NOTABLE quotes from sports figures in 1989:

"If I don't win another match this year, I'm going to be satisfied... of course, three days from now I won't be saying that but right now that's the way I feel." — Ivan Lendl, after winning the Australian Open.

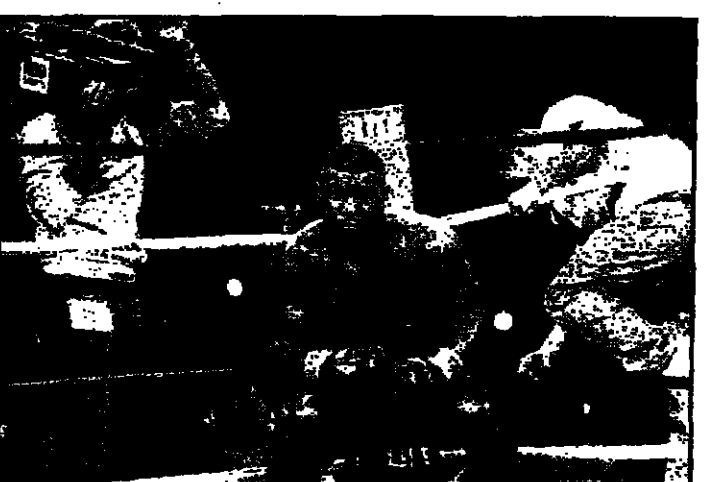
"I felt ill because I ate something that upset my stomach. Then I drank and took some sleeping pills. I don't remember anything else. They exaggerated this story." — Bjorn Borg on Feb 9, dismissing reports that he had attempted suicide in Rome a day earlier with an overdose of barbiturates.

"How dare they challenge me, these boxers with their primitive boxing skills. They're as good as dead." — Heavyweight champion Mike Tyson after pouncing Britain's Frank Bruno into submission Feb 25.

"I have decided to run on a different track." — Track star Florence Griffith Joyner, announcing her retirement in late February.

"I thought the 15 months would ruin my golf, and if there is anybody that comes near Sweden, they will kill us in two minutes anyway." — Golfer Anders Forsbrand after he moved to Spain to avoid a 15-month stint in the Swedish military.

"We're awash in a sea of denials. People have to recognise what's going on out there, admit the levels of performance are not possible without performance-enhancing drugs and get on with the process of trying to make some changes." — Charles Francis, Ben Johnson's track coach, testifying before the Canadian



Tyson: How dare they challenge me

commission investigating drugs and athletics.

"If she thought she could climb up to the top of the rafters and jump off with her skates on, do six backflip revolutions and land on her feet, she would do it." — Skater Chris Bowman, on Japan's Midori Ito, who performed the first triple axel by a woman in a major competition and earning five perfect 6.0s at the World Figure Skating Championship in Paris.

"We should change the team colours to black and blue and the symbol to the Red Cross." — Boston Celtics physician Dr Arnold Scheller, describing the team's frustrating injury situation after the team played a game without Larry Bird, Kevin McHale, Robert Parish and Jim Paxson.

"I would go in a heartbeat. I'd pay my own ticket over there. It teed me off when the Russians were high-fiving like they had

beaten America's best and I knew they hadn't." — NBA star Karl Malone, when asked if he'd play in the Olympics in Barcelona in 1992 if they were open to professionals.

"The purses are so big out here now that the money-winning list doesn't mean anything... In two or three years, \$1 million might be the crummiest purse we have." — Pro golfer Mark Calcavecchia on the PGA Tour.

"You dream it's going to happen, and when it does right before your eyes, you can't believe it." — Nick Faldo, on winning the Masters on the second playoff hole.

"Generations of fighters have copied his style, including Muhammad Ali... Sugar was a fantastic puncher. We'll all miss him. I know I'll miss him." — Archie Moore, former light heavyweight champion, on the death of his friend Sugar Ray Robinson.



Garrison: I felt like a villain

"They squeezed everything out of me, and then they dropped me." — Former East German world record swimmer Christine Knacke, recounting how East German officials forced her to take steroids to improve her performance, and then kicked her off the team when her health deteriorated.

"People used to question all the time in Moscow why the East Germans were kept totally segregated and why their women all had very big voices and five o'clock shadows. We knew what was going on but it was something we just accepted." — Sharon Davies, an Olympic silver medalist about taking drugs to enhance performance.

"Only when we are both grandfather and grandmother will people realise what we have achieved." — Boris Becker on German fans' reactions to the Wimbledon triumphs by himself and Steffi Graf. They grew up in West German towns 10 kilometres (6

Rizzo and Hill move into lead

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico, Dec 17, (Reuters): Pati Rizzo and Mike Hill combined for a 12-under-par 60 yesterday to take a one-shot lead into the final round of the \$900,000 Champions Team Golf Tournament at the Dorado Beach Golf Club.

Rizzo and Hill birdied seven holes on the front nine and five holes on the back nine for a one stroke advantage over a group of three teams tied for second.

"I thought both of us played extremely well, Hill said.

Rizzo agreed. "It was a good 50-50 effort out there today," she said.

Tied for second were the teams of Beth Daniel/Orrville Moody, Tammy Green/Don Bies, and Jane Little.

One shot further adrift were Sherri Turner and Charles Coody.

Damiani stops Netto

CESENA, Italy, Dec 17, (AP): Francesco Damiani defended his World Boxing Organization heavy weight crown last night, stopping challenger Daniel Netto in the second round.

Damiani drove Netto to the canvas twice. The Argentine challenger got up each time, but after the second his corner threw in the towel 1:58 into the second round.

The easy victory in the lopsided bout gave the undefeated 31-year-old Italian champion his 24th win as a professional. Netto, 28, lost for the first time as a pro. His record fell to 17 wins, including eight by knockout, one loss and a draw.

Damiani, who won 19 of his previous fights by knockouts, almost finished Netto in the first round, landing a left hook on the jaw that knocked the challenger down.

Netto struggled to his feet only to be rocked by a barrage of combinations from Damiani.

Damiani was making his first defense since he won the WBO crown last May 6 by knocking out Johnny du Plooy of South Africa.

Netto, who weighed in at 198 pounds (89 kilograms), tried ineffectively at the beginning of the round to keep Damiani at bay with his own shots.



Comaneci: I want a quiet life

ster, on whether Soviet athletes should be allowed to keep all their prize money.

"Darrell, you are a compulsive, crazy, lying, lunatic." — Florence Griffith Joyner denying sprinter Darrell Robinson's allegations Sept 21 that she bought growth hormones.

"We have still got the Ryder Cup in this country, which is what we set out to do. It would have been lovely to have won it... You can always look back and say: 'What if?' — Tony Jacklin, European golf team captain, after his team retained the cup on a 14-14 draw with the favoured United States.

"I have a kindergarten, 11 or 12 new players, all very young." — Central Red Army coach Viktor Tikhonov on the loss of many Soviet players to the NHL.

"If it was, pardon the expression, some clown doing it, it would have bothered me. But not

Wayne." — Gordie Howe on his all-time NHL scoring record being broken by Wayne Gretzky.

"I want just a quiet life, but I don't think I'll have a chance." — Nadia Comaneci, the Romanian gymnast, after defecting to the United States.

"Certainly, we're not thrilled. But it could have been much worse. We expected to be barred from all international competition for the next four years, not just from the 1994 World Cup." — Guillermo Weinstein, president of the Chilean Soccer Federation, on FIFA's sanctions for Chile's attempted coverup of the goalkeeper's feigned injury in the Sept 3 match against Brazil.

"My compliments to Italy and my comrades who play for the blue squad. Their draw was truly benign." — Diego Maradona of Argentina on the Dec 9 drawing that gave host Italy the easiest group for the 1990 World Cup soccer championship.

W. Germany retain Davis Cup

STUTTGART, West Germany, Dec 17, (UPI): Boris Becker demolished Mats Wilander 6-2, 6-0, 6-2 today to give West Germany its second straight Davis Cup tennis title.

Becker, who pounded Stefan Edberg in his opening singles on Friday, never let Wilander in the one hour, 44 minute match. As a mark of his supreme confidence he sealed the win on his first match point, with a service winner on a second serve.

His victory gave West Germany a 3-1 winning lead, making the final singles match between Edberg and Carl-Uwe Steeb irrelevant.

Becker served 13 aces, and Wilander failed to earn a point on Becker's serve until the seventh game of the first set.

Trailing 2-5, Wilander sent back a stinging service return winner and then saved a smash to have his first break point.

He merely delayed the inevitable, however, and Becker wrapped up the first set in just 37 minutes.

Nor did Becker's return disappoint. He broke Wilander to love in the first and third games of the second set, never hesitating to take the net despite the effects of a four hour doubles match yesterday.

His aggression paid off since Wilander, struggling against Becker's power, was rarely able to pass the West German needed only 31 minutes to win the six games of the set.

The only other time Wilander had lost a Davis Cup singles set 6-0 was in losing to Australia's Paul McNamee in 1981.

It took Becker's head-to-head record over Wilander to 6-2.

Despite the loss, Sweden keeps its record as the most successful Davis Cup nation in the 1980s. The Swedes won in 1984, 1985 and 1987, and reached seven consecutive finals.

Wilander's five-set victory over Carl-Uwe Steeb on Friday had given the Swedes a realistic hope of recapturing the title, but Becker's dominance — he partnered Eric Jelen to victory in doubles over the favoured Swedish duo of Jan Gunnarsson and Anders Jarryd — proved insurmountable.

BRIDGE

RESULTS of the Hubara Bridge Club game played on Sat today:

N/S
1. Bianca Moussati & Ahmed Tawil
2. Shah & Zuberi
3. S. Singh & Banerji
E/W
1. Salman Ali & George
2. L. Rawlwick & J. Rawlwick
3. Gokal & Jawahiri

Champions dedicate win to Gullit

Milan edge Nacional

TOKYO, Dec 17, (Reuters): European soccer champions AC Milan won the World Club Championship today thanks to a substitute and dedicated the victory to Ruud Gullit, their star player who was not fit to take part.

A goal three minutes from the end of extra time by Alberigo Evani from a free kick secured a hard-fought 1-0 victory against South American champions Atletico Nacional of Colombia.

The Italian team's triumph, achieved in perfect conditions

and watched by a 62,000 sell-out crowd, completed a hat-trick of international club honours in one year. AC Milan recently added the European Super Cup to the Champion's Cup.

"We dedicate this victory to the unlucky Ruud Gullit," manager Arrigo Sacchi told a news conference. The inspirational Dutch international, sidelined since June, has knee problems that may keep him out of action until well into the new year.

If Gullit had played, there

would probably have been no appearance by Evani, who replaced Diego Fuser in the 65th minute as Milan sought to find a way through the tightly-disciplined Nacional defence.

When Dutch international striker Marco van Basten was pulled down just in front of the penalty box in the 117th minute, the free kick should have been taken by midfield powerhouse Roberto Donadoni.

"But I saw a space and asked if I could take the kick instead," Evani said at the press conference.

His low, pinpoint shot went round Nacional's wall and into the left corner of the net.

It was one of the few clear shots at goal in the two hours of play, dominated by two similar defences who played a tight, off-side trap that caused nearly all the game to be played in a crowded, middle third of the field.

For connoisseurs of technique, there was much to marvel at in the artistry of many of the players, but little drama or goal-mouth incident to savour for a boisterous and well-mannered crowd, equally divided in loyalty between the two teams.

The outstanding individuals were Milan captain Franco Baresi and Geovanni Cassiani, his opposite number in the

Nacional defence.

The crowd's favourite was long-haired Nacional goalkeeper Rene Higuita, who dribbled with the ball almost up to the halfway line, as well as heading and juggling it.

"Nacional posed a double problem for us," Sacchi said. "They were playing not only to win but for the nation, to rebut criticism of their country as a drug nation and to show their skills so as to be bought by Italian clubs."

The Nacional side provides the nucleus of Colombia's team who will play in next year's World Cup finals in Italy.

"We were out of shape," said Nacional manager Francisco Maturana after the game. "We were not in the habit of playing after our championship was cancelled."

Colombia's 15-team League was indefinitely suspended last month after the murder of a referee.

Reflecting on AC Milan's treble triumph, Baresi said: "For us, the European Cup is more important than today's trophy, because it involves more matches."

The holders are in the quarter-finals of this season's European Cup.



Baresi (right) and Nacional's Alveiro Usuriaga struggle for the ball. (Reuters wirephoto)

Kifco outclass Starlite

MAINTAINING their unbeaten record this season, Kifco overwhelmed Starlite by 67 runs to reach the finals of the Al Athla Trophy.

A bright opening, which has become the hallmark of Kifco saw runs again flow swiftly from the blades of Arshad Shams and Nasir. Nasir went uncharacteristically for a big hit and was caught at the ropes for 17 and Pervez Aslam, who joined Arshad, could not last long when his intended shot for six failed to sail over the boundary and landed into the waiting hands of Iqbal Junior. This was a prized wicket for Starlite as Pervez Aslam is one of the most feared batsmen around these days.

Some quick thinking on the part of Kifco skipper and resultant change in the batting line up brought Rashid Ansari to the wicket and he literally stepped into the shoes of Pervez Aslam.

Not denying the fact that Rashid is a class cricketer in himself, he produced some shots which should have earned the envy of even Pervez Aslam. A 110-run partnership, full of fireworks, came to an end when Arshad was deceived by a Badar delivery and was bowled for 84, which contained four sixes and three fours.



Arshad Shams



Rashid Ansari

Rashid's innings also came to a close when he was brilliantly caught by Ejaz Butt for 82, studied with six sixes and four fours. Amin and Aqueel kept up the tempo and at the end of 27 overs Kifco had scored 245 runs for the loss of 4 wickets.

Starlite opened their innings with Iqbal Rizvi and Baber and the first over which yielded 11 runs indicated that they were willing to take up the challenge of scoring approximately 9 runs per over to surpass Kifco's total. In the third over however, Iqbal Rizvi was caught by Aqueel off Shahid Butt for 17 and Baber followed him soon after having had his stumps shattered by Masoor Khan for an

identical score. Masood Senior tried to put some life into their efforts but could not do much in the face of some intelligent bowling by Ameen and Aqueel. Once Masood was out, caught, again by Aqueel of Amin for 55, the fight was lost.

Shabbir, Zia, Baber and Ejaz Butt could not last long against a rampaging Aqueel Ashraf and at the score of 178 for 8 wickets in the 26th over, Starlite surrendered the game tamely to Kifco as the two remaining batsmen failed to appear at the crease. Kifco won the match by 67 runs. Aqueel took three wickets for 47 runs while Amin's two wickets in 6 overs cost him only 27 runs.

Monsuri wins bowling title

DUBLIN, Dec 17, (Reuters): Top seed Salem Monsuri of Qatar narrowly defeated Sweden's Kenneth Andersson to win the men's final of the Tenspin Bowling World Cup today.

In a cliff-hanging finish, the 23-year-old university of Qatar student beat Andersson by 226 to 223 pins.

It was the second successive triumph for a Gulf states bowler, Monsuri following up the success of United Arab Emirates' Mohammed Khalifa in last year's final.

Being the number one seed, Monsuri watched as four others fought for the right to meet him in the decider.

Pre-tournament favourite Paeng Nepomoceno of the Philippines was unable to produce his best form and went down to American Darold Meisel who in turn bowed out to Andersson.

The Swede went on to eliminate West German Bern Baubhofer to earn his place against Monsuri.

German officials

STUTTGART, West Germany, Dec 17, (Reuters): The East and West German tennis federations will meet for the first time next month to discuss ways of improving the game in East Germany, officials from both sides said today.

"We are going to meet on Jan 13 in East Berlin to find out whether it is possible to work together," West German Federation (DTB) president Claus Stauder said.



Jubilant Milan players celebrate their win. (Reuters wirephoto)

Giants clinch playoff berth

NEW YORK, Dec 17, (Agencies): The New York Giants clinched a berth in the National Football League playoffs and the Denver Broncos wrapped up the home-field advantage for the playoffs after victories yesterday.

New York blanketed the visiting Dallas Cowboys 15-0 to guarantee themselves a place in the post-season. The Giants, certain of at least a wildcard berth, could still win the National Football Conference Eastern Division title if the Philadelphia Eagles falter.

Denver, losers at home last week against the Giants, overwhelmed the Cardinals 37-0 at Phoenix to ensure that the Western Division champion Broncos will host all their American Football Conference playoff games at Mile High Stadium.

Bjorn Nitmo kicked three field goals for Giants Otis Anderson ran for 91 yards and the defense totally controlled the Cowboys.

The left-footed Nitmo, who has played the last four games for the injured Raul Allegre, had field goals of 33 and 22 yards in the first quarter and a 26-yarder in the second quarter as the Giants allowed Dallas only as deep as their 44 before intermission. Anderson, who carried 25 times, went in from 1 yard out in the third for New York's touchdown.

The defense, meanwhile, limited Dallas to just one drive of any substance, then stopped the Cowboys on four shots from the 1 with the help of a replay reversal of what was first ruled a touchdown pass from Troy Aikman to Steve Folsom. It was the second straight week the Giants had stopped an opponent from the 1.

In fact, so confident were the Giants of their defense that Phil Simms threw only twice in the second half and finished 9 of 19 for 140 yards.

■ Whether Philadelphia Eagles fans want to raise a glass of beer to toast a victory or drown their sorrows, they'll have to do it somewhere other than in the Bleachers.

Teams after games played on Saturday (tabulate under won, lost, tied, points for, against)						W L T PF PA			
American Conference						Y N Y Giants			
Eastern Division						Philadelphia			
W L T PF PA						Washington			
Buffalo						Phoenix			
Miami						Dallas			
Indianapolis						Central Division			
New England						Minnesota			
N Y Jets						Green Bay			
Houston						Chicago			
Cleveland						Tampa Bay			
Cincinnati						Detroit			
Pittsburgh						Western Division			
X-Denver						X-San Francisco			
LA Raiders						LA Rams			
Kansas City						New Orleans			
Seattle						Atlanta			
San Diego						Y-clinched division title			
						Y-clinched wild card berth			

Bangladeshis play exhibition match

BROTHERS CLUB, a local Bangladeshi cricket team, organised an exhibition match on Friday between Bangladesh Reds and Bangladesh Greens to mark the 18th Victory Day of Bangladesh.

The two teams, drawn up from members of the Brothers Club were captained by Tutul and Moavinal Islam.

Moavinal won the toss for Greens, at the EPI Ground, and elected to field. Mohsin Ali Khan, charge de affaires at the Bangladesh embassy in Kuwait, inaugurated the match by playing the first over in which he displayed some stylish shots.

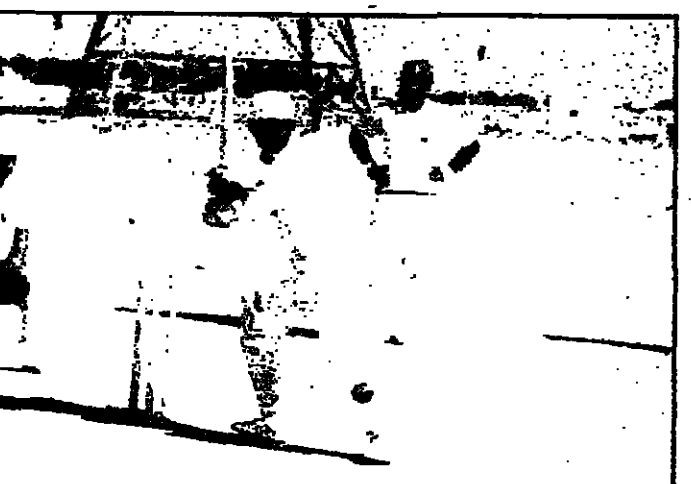
Tutul and Salman opened the innings for Reds and put on 47 runs before the latter was bowled by Masood for 16.

Thereafter the wickets fell at regular intervals but Tutul (31), Haroon (16) and Kamal (16) took Reds score to a respectable 130 for nine wickets in the stipulated 30 overs.

For Greens, Parvi returned the best bowling figures with two wickets for 16 runs in the allocated 5 overs while Masood captured 2 for 20. The other wicket-takers for Greens were Sadeq, Mohammed Hussain and Chowdhury.

Greens' innings was opened by Mohammed Hussain and Sadeq but with the score at only 10 runs, Hussain was unluckily run out. Greens lost two more quick wickets, with the total at 20. However, Masood joined Sadeq at the crease and steered their team out of danger, each scoring 46 runs.

Chowdhury scored a useful 13 runs to help his team to take the score to 131 for 6 wickets in



Mohsin Ali Khan inaugurates the match.



The two teams with the charge de affaires.

27 overs and finally clinch victory. Salman was the most successful bowler for the Reds, getting two wickets for 21 runs. Tutul got one for 16 while Zubair got one for 20. Masood was declared the

Man of the Match while Sadeq and Parvi were adjudged the Best Batsman and Best Bowler respectively. Mohsin Ali Khan, distributed the prizes at the end of the match.

A special attraction of the day



The game in progress.



The food stall.

was a lucky draw where the first prize was a VCP. The second prize was a cassette radio.

Hundreds of Bangladeshis turned up to cheer the two teams. The players' wives joined in to run the food stall which

was set up on one side of the spectators tent to sell delicious homemade sweets and savouries. The officials and players of Brothers Club thanked all those who helped them organise the match.

Invitation

The Kuwait International Fair Co. is pleased to invite the public to visit the

6th Childrens World Exhibition

Forty companies, specialised in manufacture and trade of children's toys, entertainment and educational means and garments, will take part in the exhibition.

It will be held between Dec 20-29, at hall No. 3 at the International Fair Grounds in Mishref.

The exhibition will open daily from 9.00 am to 1.00 pm and from 4.00 to 9.00 pm

With compliments from

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